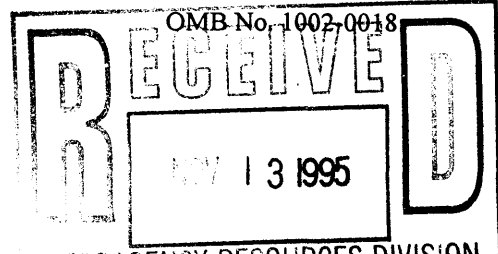


NPS Form 10-900  
(January 1993)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

This form is for use in requesting determination of eligibility 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 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 from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Saint Ann's Catholic Church and Cemetery

other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number W3963 Brehm Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Town of Greenwood N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Taylor code 119 zip code 54470

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designed authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 x meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 7 NOV 1995  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

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 certifying official /Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Name of Property

Taylor County Wisconsin  
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:)

Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beal Date of Action 12.14.95  
Entered in the National Register.

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)  
 private  
\_\_\_ public-local  
\_\_\_ public-state  
\_\_\_ public-federal

Category of Property (check only one box)  
 building  
\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include listed resources within the count)  
Contributing    Noncontributing  
1                    1    buildings  
1                       sites  
                      structures  
                      objects  
2                    1    Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register  
0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)  
religion/religious facility  
Funerary/cemetery

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)  
Religion/religious facility  
Funerary/cemetery

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)  
Gothic Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation concrete  
walls weatherboard  
roof asphalt  
other wood

**Narrative Description**

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

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Name of Property

Taylor County Wisconsin  
County and State

**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)

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from  
instructions)

A Property is associated with events  
that have made a significant  
contribution to the broad patterns of  
our history.

Architecture  
Ethnic Heritage  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B Property is associated with the lives  
of persons significant in our past.

Period of Significance

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

1888  
1888-1915  
\_\_\_\_\_

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield,  
information important in prehistory or history.

Significant Dates

1888  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Significant Person  
(Complete if Criterion B  
is marked above)

A owned by a religious institution or  
used for religious purposes.

N/A

B removed from its original location.

Cultural Affiliation

C a birthplace or grave.

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or  
structure.

Architect/Builder

F a commemorative property.

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

G less than 50 years of age achieved  
significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

Bibliography

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

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Name of Property

Taylor County Wisconsin  
County and State

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository:  
Architectural Researches, Inc.

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 2.75 acres

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

1 1/5 7/1/5/6/5/0 5/0/1/7/5/8/0 3 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / 4 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Northing

\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (See continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification** (See continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Joan Rausch, Historic Consultant  
organization Architectural Researches, Inc. date 31 January 1995  
street & number W5722 Sherwood Drive telephone (608) 788-5932  
city or town La Crosse state Wisconsin Zip code 54601

**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 of the property for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Name of Property

Taylor County Wisconsin  
County and State

**Property Owner** \_\_\_\_\_

name Historic St. Ann's Incorporated

street & number W3963 Brehm Avenue telephone (715) 427-5814 (Irene Dums)

city or town Rib Lake state Wisconsin Zip code 54470

**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 Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

St. Ann's Catholic Church and Cemetery is located on the upward slope of a small hill near the intersection of Brehm Avenue and Wellington Lake Drive in the rural township of Greenwood, approximately 10.5 miles north of Medford, Wisconsin. This small frame church was constructed in 1888 by members of the congregation on approximately one acre of land donated by the Wisconsin Central Railroad Company in the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4, Section 9, of Township 32 North [Greenwood] Range 2 East. The cemetery, which was expanded with land donated by Joseph Thums in 1890 and land donated by Carl and Lillian Thums in 1952, is located at the rear of the church (Abstract of Title, Vol.15:53, Vol.15:50, Vol.19:207, Vol.120:632; Diamond Jubilee, 1963:5-6). St. Ann's Church building is sited in a north to south direction on a landscaped lot featuring a large green space in front of the church and a circular drive that is ornamented by trees and bushes. A small shed [privy], a non-contributing building, is located along the west lot line. The rural site of this historic church is further enhanced by the presence of the remodeled Highland School house located at the intersection of Brehm Avenue and Wellington Lake Drive on the adjacent lot west of the church and the former Joseph Thums General Store building located on the farmstead on the north side of Brehm Avenue across from the church and school.

1. St. Ann's Church.

1888

Contributing

This rectangular, 52-foot x 30-foot, frame church features a broad, shingled gable roof, clapboard siding, and a concrete foundation. It is further characterized by long narrow pointed arched windows filled with stained glass lights. This Gothic Revival-influenced vernacular church is dominated by a two-stage, rectangular, entrance tower placed in the center of the front north-facing elevation. The roof of the first stage of the tower is topped by a belfry with a double gable roof and an octagonal steeple topped by a cross. The tower is further characterized by a long pointed arch stained glass window on the front elevation and rectangular louvered openings on the belfry. The elevated rectangular main entrance in the base of the tower features a round arched window of frosted glass over a double leafed entrance door reached by ascending a concrete stoop. The stoop is covered by a gable-roofed entrance porch. The porch displays a rectangular opening and a round-arched stained glass transom window in the gable end. Porches covering entrances to the basement are located in the angle created by the joining of the tower and the main body of the church on the east side and at the rear of the west elevation. The east porch is covered by a shingled hip roof and clapboard siding while the west porch features a gable roof and a shed-roofed addition. Three iron bells occupy the belfry of St. Ann's Church. The bells, manufactured by the Blymer Norton Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, were named after three of the original members of the congregation. Anna, the largest bell, weighs 800 pounds, Mary Teresa weighs 600 pounds, and the smallest bell Elizabeth weighs 150 pounds. The two larger bells cost \$195.67 while the smaller bell was donated by the Blymer Norton Company. The bells were installed in 1892 (Diamond Jubilee, 1963:8; Dums, "Memories"; Milwaukee Sentinel, 26 May 1994).

The interior space of St Ann's Church is divided into: a small rectangular sanctuary at the south end of the church flanked by two small sacristies; a rectangular knave featuring a wooden balcony or choir loft; and a small vestibule in the lower story of the tower. The sanctuary is divided from the nave by a white painted altar railing ornamented by an arcade of open round arches resting on round columns, a double leafed gate featuring quatrefoil shaped designs, and end posts with round arched panels. A stairway to the choir is located on the right [west] side of the nave while a confessional occupies the left corner. The balcony, which features a decorative cut-out railing, rests on two rectangular columns in the center aisle of the nave. The interior walls of the church are covered by fiberboard. The concrete basement of the church features a heated concrete floor

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 2

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

and a center beam supported by metal posts. The basement walls are painted and the room is fitted with cabinets, tables and kitchen equipment. Walls and plumbing to be used for future bathrooms are located on the north end of the room.

The interior features a very elaborate Romanesque Revival high altar and two early Gothic Revival style side altars. The stained wood high altar displays three round-arched niches decorated with wooden carvings, small gables and gilding. A statue of St. Ann with her daughter Mary is located in the center niche while the statue of St. Joseph holding Jesus occupies the left niche and a statue of St. John the Baptist is in the niche on the right side. A lamb (representing Christ) resting on the Book of Revelations, a flag (a symbol of victory) and seven medallions (symbolizing the seven seals) fill the round niche in the base of the altar. The painted altar on the right side of the nave is characterized by a pointed cusped-arch ornamented by carving and accented by gilding. The niche contains the Sacred Heart statue of Christ with the crucifixion symbols of the crown of thorns, whip, three nails, and chalice on the base of the statue. The niche of the left side altar, which is similar to the right side altar, contains a statue of Mary with flames and crown of roses around the heart. The main altar designed and constructed by the E. Hackner Altar Company was installed in 1899 at a cost of \$500.00. In c.1908, the Hackner Altar Company also constructed the Sacred Heart side altar donated by Joseph Thums and the Mary side altar donated by Kate Karl. The statue of Mary was donated in 1908 by the St. Ann's Altar Society (Altar Inscription; Dums, "Memories"; "History"; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954).

The interior of St. Ann's Church is further characterized by the six pointed-arch windows with stained glass lights placed in the side elevations of the nave. The window designs, inscribed in German with the name of the donors, incorporate the following religious symbols: East elevation: Window #1 -- Greek letters symbolizing Christ, Window #2 -- Grapes, which symbolize the wine, Window #3 -- Prophecy of Simeon, symbolized by the Blessed Virgin Mary, heart with sword, crown of roses and three lilies; West Elevation: Window #1 -- Greek symbols of Alpha and Omega, symbolizing Christ as the beginning and the end, Window #2 -- Crown of thorns and three nails, symbolizing the Crucifixion, Window #3 -- Sacred Heart of Christ symbolized by drops of blood, crown of thorns around the heart and flames at the top of the heart. Additional stained glass windows light the two sacristies and the choir loft. The choir window features a dove carrying the olive branch after the flood and the sacristy windows are decorated by the lily, a symbol of the resurrection. Keys, the symbol of the kingdom of heaven and of the sacrament of penance, are displayed in the round-arched window of the entrance porch. The stained glass windows were installed in 1910 by parishioners John and Lawrence Obowa ("Historic St. Ann's Self-Guided Tour; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:9; Dums, "Memories").

Numerous historic objects used in the liturgy of the Catholic Church characterize the interior space of this small church. A statue of St. Paul holding the sword of persecution of Christians -- a philosophy he followed prior to his conversion to Christianity -- is displayed in the southeast corner of the sanctuary and a statue of St. Peter holding the keys to the kingdom of heaven ornaments the southwest corner of the sanctuary. Both statues are displayed on white wooden bases decorated with round-arched panels. The St. Paul statue was donated in 1914 by the St. Ann's Altar Society and the statue of St. Peter was donated in the early 20th century by Clara Lyle. Both of these statues were made by the De Prado Company of Chicago. Moulded plaques depicting the stations of the cross, which were donated in the 1930s by Kate Karl to replace the earlier framed pictures of the stations, decorate the west and east walls of the church. In addition to the tabernacles in the altars, an ambry in the form of a small gabled cupboard (used to house the holy oils used in baptisms) is located on the east wall of the sanctuary next to the sacristy door (Catholic Herald, 14 August 1954; "History"; Inscription on statues); Dums, Interview, 1994, 1995).

(Rev. 8-86)

Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 1/92)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 3

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

Additional objects used in the liturgy that have been preserved as part of this historic church include vestments and altar linens used for religious services that remain in specially designed cabinets in the east sacristy. The gold vigil light featuring a red globe, the ornate missal stand, the gold incense burner, as well as the mass cards continue to characterize the sanctuary. Other precious artifacts preserved by the Historic St. Ann's organization include the gold monstrance and the highly decorative gold candlesticks that were used for celebratory events. A satin banner (bearing a picture of St. Ann [Anna] and Mary and embroidered in German with the inscription "Christliche Mutterverein, Greenwood, Wis., Heilige Mutter Anna, Bitte fur uns,") that was used previous to World War I in ceremonies such as the Corpus Christi procession is displayed in the sacristy.

The St. Ann's Catholic Church has maintained its general architectural historic character; however, it has received improvements and minor alterations over the years. Soon after the church was built, a section was added between the spire and the lower stage of the tower to give the formerly squat steeple a more fashionable and graceful appearance. An organ was added to the church in 1893, the high altar constructed by the E. Hackner Company of La Crosse was added in 1899 and the side altars, also constructed by the Hackner Company, were installed in the early 20th century (Altar Inscription; Dums, "Memories"; "History"; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Diamond Jubilee, 1963:8). The first major improvement of the church building was the installation of the stained glass lights in 1910. The lower part of the window openings were filled in because the stained glass lights were slightly smaller than the original multipaned lights). In 1933, the church was wired for electricity (although power was not available until 1946) and a basement was constructed under the building with funds provided by parishioner Kate Karl. This stone basement was constructed by Joe Heindl and sons and a support beam down the center of the basement was installed by Bill Mayer. Also in the 1930s, rehabilitated electric light fixtures from the Medford State Bank were installed in the church. During the same period, the porches for the basement and sacristy entrances were constructed and the round-arched stained glass window above the entrance door was moved to the gable end of the porch that had been added to the front of the church. Also in the 1930s, the deteriorating interior plastered walls and wooden ceiling was covered with fiberboard and wooden wainscoting (Dums, "Memories"; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; "History"; Dums, Interview, 1994). In the 1940s, the cupboard for the church vestments was reconstructed and expanded by parishioners Donald Dums and Walter Gojmerac and a new furnace was installed. In addition, new pews were installed, replacing the original pews constructed by Joseph Thums. Several of the original pews remain in the choir loft. In 1950 after lightning damage to the steeple was repaired, the church building was insulated and painted. The church suffered minor damage in 1957 when fire between the floor boards was discovered and promptly extinguished. Also, in the 1950s, a new Hammond organ replaced the original organ that had been installed in 1893 and an oil furnace was installed in the basement. (Memories"; "History"; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Diamond Jubilee, 1963:9; Star News, 15 March 1979; Dums, Interview, 1994).

Improvements mostly in the form of maintenance and restoration have enhanced the St. Ann's Church building following its acquisition in 1988 by Historic St. Ann's, Inc., a non-profit organization formed to preserve the church as a historic landmark. Within a year of the tenure of the Historic St. Ann's organization, the church was raised by Schutte Movers while a poured concrete basement was installed under the church to replace the crumbling stone foundation constructed in the 1930s. Electric heat cables were placed under the floor and drains for bathrooms were installed by Kraemer Plumbing. Also in 1988, a shed-roofed entrance to the basement was added to the gable-roofed entrance porch at the rear of the west elevation and the



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 4

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

concrete for the front entrance porch stoop was replaced. In addition, a new roof was installed on the basement entrance attached to the east end of the front elevation, the main roof of the church was repaired, the chimney removed, and some of the wooden siding was replaced with identical siding taken from a nearby house. Furthermore, in 1989, the exterior was painted and the landscaping was restored. In 1990, a new ceiling was installed in the church basement hall, the front entrance was reconstructed and the historic marker was placed in front of the church. Some of the roof boards were replaced and composition shingles added in 1991. In 1992, the front entrance was painted, the doors refinished and rain gutters were added to the building. Also, in 1991-1992, the statues of Sts. Peter, Paul, Joseph, John were cleaned and restored by Anthony Moroder of Milwaukee. Finally, a well was drilled on the property in 1993 and restrooms were added in the basement in 1994. Much of the restoration work was done by members of the former congregation of St. Ann's. (Historic St. Ann's, "Newsletter," 1989, 1991; Dums, Interview, 1994, 1995; Star News, 31 August 1988, 9 May 1990; Agri-view, 24 March, 1989; Dums, "Memories").

2. St. Ann's Catholic Church Cemetery

1887

Contributing

St. Ann's Church Cemetery, approximately 139 feet by 470 feet, contains burial sites from as early as September 4, 1887 and February 2, 1888 (Diamond Jubilee, 1963:7). Two ornate iron crucifixes styled in a manner similar to those found in churches in the German-Austrian region from which the pioneer members of the congregation immigrated characterize this cemetery. These grave markers were installed in the late 19th and early 20th century. The cemetery was enlarged in 1890 with land donated by Josef Thums and in 1952 with a parcel of land donated by Carl and Lillian Thums that connected the original church land with the cemetery land donated in 1890 (Abstract of Property, Vol. 15:53, Vol. 19:207, Vol.120:632). A marble crucifix with an automated lighting device was installed in the cemetery in the mid-1950s (Catholic Herald, 14 August 1954).

3: SHED

Non-Contributing

This small frame building is covered by a shingled roof and horizontal board siding. It is further characterized by two entrance doors. This building was used as a privy and does not contribute to the historic significance of St. Ann's Church and Cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

8. Statement of Significance

The St. Ann's Catholic Church is locally significant under Criterion C because it is a well-preserved example of a vernacular Gothic Revival styled rural church building in Taylor County. This small frame church built in 1888 is characterized by the pointed arched windows, gabled form and the steeple and belfry at the entrance end associated with the vernacular Gothic Revival style. The Gothic Revival, which was popular in Wisconsin from 1850 until 1880, is a theme identified in the Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin manual. The interior of St. Ann's features well-preserved icons, artifacts and fittings that were generally donated and made by the parishioners throughout its history. St. Ann's Catholic Church is among the best preserved of the late 19th and early 20th century Gothic Revival influenced churches remaining in Taylor County. The cemetery located at the rear of the church and its rural setting add to the historic character of St. Ann's Catholic Church (Abstract of Property, Vol.15:53, Vol.13:129; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:5-6; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Wyatt, 1986, Vol.II: 3:2-5).

St Ann's Catholic Church and Cemetery is locally significant under Criterion A because it is a physical representative of the ethnic heritage of the German-Bohemian and German congregation in the town of Greenwood. The theme of ethnic heritage is addressed in the Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin manual in the Settlement study units under the Austrian and German immigration. St. Ann's Church was constructed by German-Bohemian and German settlers, who immigrated to Taylor County in the early 1880s mainly from the border region of Bohemia and Bavaria in central Europe, which at that time was governed by the Austrian empire. The German-Bohemian and German immigrants of Greenwood township sought to re-create a community, which as in their old world, centered around church and family. St. Ann's Cemetery, which contains many of the graves of the early parishioners, also represents the history of this small immigrant group. The period of significance extends from 1888 when the church was constructed until 1915 when the use of the German language was discontinued (Wyatt, 1986, Vol. I:3-3, 3-3; Vol. I:2-2, 2-4, 2-5).

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SETTLEMENT

St. Ann's Catholic Church, situated in the northeast corner of Taylor County, is located in rural Greenwood Township (NW1/4 NW1/4, Section 9, Township 32 North, Range 2 East), approximately ten miles north of Medford and four miles southwest of Rib Lake. Taylor County was created in 1875 by Governor William R. Taylor out of territory taken from the counties of Clark, Chippewa, Lincoln and Marathon (History of Northern Wisconsin, 1888:1022-1023).

When Taylor County was formed in 1875, there was a large amount of land unsold. Furthermore, much of the land, particularly in the eastern part of the county, was owned and eventually sold by the Wisconsin Central Railroad that ran through the county from south to north east of the center of the Taylor County. The modern history of the villages in the eastern half of the county began with the construction of the railroad in 1873. The first permanent white settler, Alvin E. Harder, who located near what is now Medford, arrived in Taylor County in 1872. The main industry in early Taylor County was lumbering. By 1880, a total of 2311 residents, of which 748 were foreign born, inhabited the county (History of Northern Wisconsin, 1888:1022-1023; Historical Album, 1974:3-4).

Following the meeting of the Second Plenary Council in Baltimore in 1866, the Milwaukee diocese, established in 1842 to administer the Wisconsin Territory, was divided into several dioceses. The La Crosse Diocese was established in 1868 with Michael Heiss as bishop. The remainder of Wisconsin was assigned to the new Green Bay diocese in the northeast part of the state. At the time of its conception, the La Crosse Diocese included the area that lies north and west of the Wisconsin River. Both Heiss and his successor T. Killian Flasch (1881-1891) encouraged the creation of ethnic parishes, new parochial schools, and other religious institutions. During the period 1869 to 1881, the Diocese of La Crosse grew substantially. The number of officiating priests increased from 15 to 59 and the number of churches grew from 47 to 101. By the 1890s, there were 124 priests, 94 churches and 116 mission parishes with churches. In 1905, the Superior diocese, the fourth administrative division of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin, was created from sections of the Green Bay and La Crosse dioceses (Heming, 1898:757-758, 760).

St. Ann's Church, one of the oldest original churches remaining in the Diocese of Superior, was constructed by a group of German and Austrian settlers from central Europe along the Bohemian-Austrian border, who emigrated to Taylor County mainly during the years 1881, 1882 and 1883. Following their first organizational meeting in October of 1887, at the home of Wenzel Thums, the group elected a committee of three

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

men, Joseph Niggemann, Thomas Seidel, and Josef Thums, to seek permission of their diocese to build a mission church. Bishop Flasch of the Diocese of La Crosse readily granted permission. In 1888, a Gothic Revival-influenced church building was constructed by the parishioners led by skilled carpenters such as Josef Thums, who was known to have worked on St. Stephens Church in Austria, and Phillip Haider. The church and accompanying cemetery were sited on a hillside surrounded by a grove of hemlock on one acre of land donated by the Wisconsin Central Railroad. The church was located next to the Highland School built on an acre of land that was also donated to the community by the Central Railroad. This crossroads community gathering place was augmented by the establishment in 1892 of the Thums General Store and Post Office across the road from the school and church (Abstract of Property, Vol.15:53, Vol.13:129; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:5-6; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; (Dums, "Memories,").

Throughout its existence, St. Ann's was a mission church served by priests from nearby parishes. In 1941, the responsibility of St. Ann's, along with the other mission parishes located at Westboro, Whittlesey, Chelsea and Rib Lake, was transferred to the Fathers of the Society of Precious Blood. This Catholic order of priest ministered to St Ann's until the church was closed by the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior in 1963. The closing was precipitated by the shortage of priests combined with the proximity of other Catholic parishes. The parishioners were divided among the three nearby parishes of Rib Lake, Chelsea, and Whittlesey but the church building and its artifacts that remained were taken care of by the former members of the parish located nearby. The church was used only occasionally for weddings and funerals (Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; (Dums, "Memories,").

Following its closing, the status of the St. Ann's Church building remained unresolved and the building gradually fell into disrepair. Efforts to preserve St. Ann's Church and Cemetery began in earnest in the late 1970s. The former parishioners sought unsuccessfully to have it declared a historic site by the Taylor County Historical Society. After years of uncertainty over the fate of the church, Bishop Hammes made the decision to demolish the church in March 1983 because the diocese considered it a safety hazard as well as a poor investment. The former parishioners of St. Ann's, organized as the St. Ann's Preservation Committee, offered to take over the repair and maintenance of the building. Eventually the forces to preserve the German heritage of the community prevailed, and, in 1987, the group was given the option of assuming ownership of the building, its contents and cemetery by the Diocese. Following the formation of the Historic St. Ann's preservation organization, which was incorporated on July 24, 1987, St. Ann's Church has been the

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

recipient of considerable restorative and maintenance work. St. Ann's remains open for visitors throughout the summer months (Star News, 15 March 1979; 9 November 1983, 11 May 1983, 10 June 1987, 6 July 1988, 31 August 1988, 1 March 1989, 9 May 1990, 20 June 1990; Catholic Herald, 4 August 1988, 15 September 1988; Dums, Interview, 1994).

#### ARCHITECTURE

St. Ann's Catholic Church is locally significant under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of a vernacular Gothic Revival church building constructed in late 19th century rural Taylor County. This frame church is characterized by the pointed-arch windows, the gabled form, and the tower with belfry associated with the ecclesiastical Gothic Revival style. The well-preserved interior and the exceptionally well-preserved religious icons and furnishings contribute to the significance of St. Ann's Church. The historic character of this small rural church is further enhanced by the accompanying cemetery at the rear of the church, and by its picturesque rural setting.

St. Ann's Church, one of the oldest original churches remaining in the Diocese of Superior, was constructed by a group of German and Austrian [German-Bohemian] settlers, who immigrated from the Bavarian-Bohemian border beginning in the 1881. Following their first organizational meeting in October of 1887 at the home of Wenzel Thums, the group elected a committee of three men, Joseph Niggemann, Thomas Seidel, and Josef Thums, to seek permission of their diocese to build a church. Bishop Flasch of the Diocese of La Crosse readily granted permission. In 1888, a Gothic Revival-influenced church building was constructed by the parishioners led by skilled carpenters such as Josef Thums, who was known to have worked on St. Stephens Church in Vienna, Austria, and Phillip Haider. Josef Thums had been trained as a carpenter and maker of cabinets and caskets previous to his arrival in America. No other building in the community can be attributed to him except perhaps his own house and buildings. Phillip Haider is known to have apprenticed as a carpenter before immigrating to America. However, the traditional Bohemian construction, which relied on local stone and mortar, was hard to duplicate in America. Most sources maintain the buildings and interior furnishings of most immigrant groups generally conformed to American building practices. Although the sill and steeple of St. Ann's were constructed using hand hewn beams, the remainder of the building was of balloon frame construction, which was introduced in America in the mid 19th

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

century (Abstract of Property, Vol.15:53, Vol.13:129; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:5-6; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Dums, "Memories,"; Zeitlin, 1977:26-27; Meter and Paulson, 1993:18; Dums, Interview, 1995).

According to Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management manual, the Gothic Revival style, popular in Wisconsin from 1850 until 1880, displayed the universal feature, the pointed arch, as well as steeply pitched roofs, pinnacles, and battlements. The manual further states Gothic Revival churches were generally built with a basilica plan, with a steeple at the entrance end and frequently were built in stone although some were built of wood in the "Carpenter Gothic" interpretation of the style. Often, only one or two of these features were used by the vernacular builder to suggest the medieval appearance associated with the Gothic style (Wyatt, 1986, Vol. III: 3:2-5).

St. Ann's Catholic Church is a frame, clapboard covered church characterized mainly by the pointed arch windows of the vernacular Gothic Revival style. Typically, the church features the steeple at the entrance end; however, as in many small vernacular Gothic Revival churches, St. Ann's displays a hall plan with an apse on the south end and a vestibule or narthex in the tower on the north end rather than the typical basilica plan of the larger Gothic Revival church buildings. The historic character of this well-preserved Gothic Revival church building is enhanced by the exceptionally well-preserved interior lighted by the tall pointed-arch stained glass lights. The Romanesque Revival-styled high altar and the Gothic Revival-styled side altars created by the Hackner Altar Company of La Crosse, Wisconsin and religious icons used in the Catholic religious services contribute to the historic ambience of this small church.

Egid Hackner founded the Hackner Altar Company in La Crosse in 1880. Born in Bavaria, Hackner had extensive training in Europe as an architect and craftsman. Apprenticed to Michael Wagner, a master of church art for three years, he studied at the Munich School of Art for two years. In 1886, Hackner built a workshop and house at 1235 Ferry Street. Twenty skilled craftsmen were employed at this workshop in 1894, where nearly all the work was done by hand and foot-powered machinery. Sculpting in marble was begun in 1891 and continued until World War I when Italian marble was no longer available. A new factory where power tools were installed and 50-70 men were employed was constructed in 1910. Much of the work was done by Swiss and Southern German carvers under the direction of Rudolph Blatter, who assisted Hackner for over 30 years beginning at the turn of the century. The Hackner Company created articles for churches throughout the entire country including St. Mary's

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 6

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

Cathedral in Portland, Oregon, the Cathedrals at Los Angeles, Baltimore, Spokane and Boise, Idaho and St. Mary's of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois. This company is known to have created altars and reredos for the Christ Episcopal Church at La Crosse in 1898, and for the Maria Angelorum Chapel at St. Rose Convent, also in La Crosse, in 1905-1907. The Hackner Company continued under the direction of his descendents until it closed in 1963 (Rausch and Zeitlin, 1984:81; La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press, 9 October 1927).

The building of St. Ann's Catholic Church has been preserved as it was constructed in 1888; however, it was enhanced and embellished throughout the ensuing years. Substantial improvements to the physical environment of the church include an addition to increase the height of the original tower soon after construction, the installation of the three iron bells manufactured by the Blymyer Norton Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1892, an organ installed in 1893, the addition of the ornate high altar in 1899 and the side altars and statues in the early 20th century, the installation of stained glass in the windows in 1910, the construction of a basement under the church in 1933, the addition of electric power in 1946 to fuel the lights wired previously in the 1930s, and the installation of new pews in the early 1940s. Exterior entrances that covered the entrances to the sacristy and to the basement, as well as a concrete front entrance stoop, were added to the original church building in the 1930s after the construction of the basement (Dums, Interview, 1994, 1995; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Dums, "Memories,").

Following the formation of the Historic St. Ann's preservation organization in 1987, St. Ann's Church was the recipient of considerable restorative and maintenance work. During the year 1987-1988, a new concrete basement replaced the earlier stone basement, the siding was repaired, the electrical wiring was updated, the east entrance was roofed, the west entrance was enlarged to accommodate an entrance to the basement, and the main roof was repaired when the chimney was removed. In 1990, a new ceiling was installed in the basement and the front entrance porch was reconstructed and made slightly longer, and in 1991, the church received a new roof. Recently, restrooms were added to the basement facilities (St. Ann's, "Newsletter," 1989, 1991, 1993; Star News, 10 June 1987, 6 July 1988, 1 March 1989, 9 May 1990; Catholic Herald, 4 August 1988, 15 September 1988; Dums, Interview, 1994).

St. Ann's Catholic Church is among the best preserved of the late 19th and early 20th century Gothic Revival churches remaining in Taylor County. In a survey of Taylor County conducted in November of 1994, nine extant churches in Taylor County

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

displaying the characteristics of the late 19th and early 20th century Gothic Revival style were identified. In addition to St. Ann's Church in Greenwood, the best preserved Gothic Revival-influenced churches in Taylor County, are two brick Gothic Revival-influenced church buildings, the 1909 Evangelical Lutheran Zion Kirche in Stetsonville (Photograph #25) designed by architect Henry Wildhagen of Ashland, and the German Evangelical Church constructed in 1902 on East Broadway in Medford (Photograph #26). The German Evangelical Church in Medford has been altered by the additions to its front and rear. Frame examples of late 19th and early 20th century Gothic Revival churches display less integrity than the brick representative of the style. St. Ann's Catholic Church is the best example of the frame interpretation of the vernacular Gothic Revival style in the county. The Methodist Church built in 1892 in Rib Lake (Photograph #27), the now vacant Methodist Church located on the corner of Second Street in Westboro (Photograph #28), and the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Gilman (Photograph #29) are among the better preserved of the frame Gothic Revival-influenced churches remaining in Taylor County. Less well-preserved representatives of Gothic Revival influence in Taylor County include the Our Savior's Lutheran Church built in rural Medford in 1905, which received a new steeple and front when it was remodeled extensively in 1962, and the significantly altered St. John's Lutheran Church in Rib Lake. Arched windows characterize the frame New Hope Presbyterian Church in Hannibal (Photograph # 32), which has lost its steeple. Another fairly well-preserved example of the vernacular Gothic Revival influence in the early 20th century is the Assumption Catholic Church constructed in 1914 in Chelsea (Photograph #33); however, this church displays concrete block construction and wooden gables. (Cornerstones, Building Inscriptions, Directory of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1985; Dums, Assumption BVM Catholic Church, 1887 - 1988:3-15; Medford Historical Album, 1974:79-91; Latton, 1947: 202-207; Dums, Interview, 1995).

St. Ann's Catholic Church is a significant example of a late 19th century Gothic Revival-influenced vernacular church building. It is among the best preserved of the Gothic Revival-influenced late 19th and early 20th century church buildings in Taylor County. The preservation of the St. Ann's Catholic Church Cemetery at the rear of the church adds to its historic setting.



NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

ETHNIC HERITAGE

St Ann's Catholic Church and Cemetery is significant under Criterion A as a physical representative of the ethnic heritage of the German-Bohemian and German congregation of St. Ann's in the town of Greenwood because it reflects their cultural traditions. The movement to construct St. Ann's Church was lead by German-Bohemian and German settlers, who immigrated in the early 1880s from the border region of Bohemia and Bavaria in central Europe, which at that time was governed by the Austrian empire. The church was among the most powerful social and spiritual forces in the German-Bohemian culture linking family life. The German-Bohemian immigrants of Greenwood township sought to re-create a community centered around church and family. St. Ann's Cemetery, which contains many of the graves of the original parishioners, contributes to the historic significance of this well preserved cultural symbol.

The German speaking German-Bohemian immigrants sometimes were identified as German by the census takers, often as Austrians, and occasionally as Bohemians, because Bohemia was governed by the Hapsburgs of Austria at the time of their immigration and at the time the census was collected. The matter was further complicated by the immigrants' identification of themselves as Austrian rather than the politically incorrect German nationality or of the socially disadvantaged Bohemian heritage. Furthermore, the identification of an immigrant as Bohemian did not address the difference between the Bohemian and the Czech immigrants. According to the Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin manual, the Austrian empire in the 19th century included a wide variety of ethnic and nationality groups such as Poles, Czechs, Bohemians, Croats, Slovaks, Magyars, Bulgars, Serbs, Rumanians, Italians, Bosnians as well as German-Austrians. Germans born in Prague before 1918 might have reported themselves as from Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, or Czechoslovakia. The subsequent confusion over the definition of an "Austrian" immigrant has resulted in inconclusive information on the Austrian immigration, as well as, for other nationalities under Austrian rule. The Cultural Resource manual further states that for the purpose of Wisconsin's cultural resource plan, the term "Austrian" will basically refer to German-Austrians, who were Germanic in language and culture and who looked to Germanic centers for cultural leadership. As the right to emigrate was not accorded by the Hapsburg government until 1848, Austrian emigration did not peak until 1910. Unlike their German relatives, Austrians settled most often in cities and towns rather than on farms (Wyatt, 1986: Vol. I:3-3,3-3).

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

The German-Bohemian community was influenced to a large extent by the Germanic culture. Ethnically, the German-Bohemian people descended from Germanic people who lived in Bavaria, Silesia and Austria. The German presence in Bohemia was limited until 973, when the Catholic Church put Prague under the archbishop of Mainz, who encouraged German settlements in the area to support the influence of the Catholic Church. German settlements were further encouraged in the 14th century under the rule of Karl IV in Bohemia's golden age. Diligent Germans were viewed as valuable, productive settlers. Furthermore, German settlers of the border region were seen as a stabilizing influence in this politically sensitive area and were given free land to till and a measure of freedom to govern themselves in return (Meter and Paulson, 1993:6, 24-25).

By 1200, Germans were a majority in the border settlements such as Egerland, where they were able to govern themselves free of interference from the Bohemian parliament. The German settlement in Bohmerwald, however, viewed the border as an arbitrary line and mixed freely with the Czech and Bavarian families on both sides of the border. The Bohmerwald region was rocky and mountainous and the people relied on the woods and game to sustain them. The Catholic church was a strong presence in Bohmerwald with the most important churches located in the provincial centers. However, the freedoms of the border areas vanished with the defeat of the Hapsburg lord by the Bavarians. The farmers of the area did not regain their independence until the land reforms granted by their Austrian rulers following the breakdown of the feudal system in the 19th century. As land became scarce and the farm prices fell, immigration to pursue opportunity in America became a greater attraction. The Austro-Hungarian empire was altered by the events of World War I and Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia were united by the Allies into the country of Czecho-Slovakia in 1918. The character of the German-Bohemian communities along the borders of Bavaria and Bohemia was altered after World War II when, in retaliation against the Nazi regime, the Czechs expelled the entire German-speaking population (Meter and Paulson, 1993:6, 14-15, 24-28).

The Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin manual also addresses the difficulty of placing German speaking immigrants in a precise context since German speaking ethnics came from a wide variety of national and provincial backgrounds. According to the Cultural Resource manual, in general, German settlements of Wisconsin began along the entire eastern lakeshore south of Green Bay, and, after 1860, the Germans moved from the prairie land into the heavily forested north-central counties. The greatest numbers congregated in Shawano, Marathon, Lincoln, Wood, Taylor, Price, and Ashland counties. Taylor County, in particular, reported 75% of the population was

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

of German extraction. The Cultural Resource Management manual further reports that apart from personal contacts and Wisconsin's promotional programs and generous land policy, the railroad and lumber companies played a particularly important role in attracting Germans to this region. The Wisconsin Central Railroad, which constructed a railroad north through the eastern half of Taylor County, attracted many Germans to Wisconsin through active promotion by its European agent. Immigrant houses built by the railroad where the immigrants were permitted to stay for two weeks after arrival were located at stops such as Medford and Chelsea. The availability of inexpensive land from the railroad and government, the "land hunger" of the immigrants and the opportunity for seasonal labor in nearby logging camps all contributed to the successful settlement of Taylor County and the remainder of northern Wisconsin. The Cultural Resource Management manual further maintains German immigrants tended to cluster according to their place of origin and, to a lesser extent, according to their religious preferences. This settlement pattern led to a highly cohesive community (Wyatt, 1986, Vol. I:2-2, 2-4, 2-5).

The German speaking Bohemian immigration and settlement roughly coincided with the main body of the German rather than the Slavic immigration. Immigrants left Bohemia in waves following land reforms when the feudal holdings were turned over to the families who worked the land by the Austrian empire. The first wave of immigration, which peaked in 1859, was cut off by the Civil War. When the Homestead Act opened new land after the war and farm prices fell in Bohemia, a new wave of immigration occurred from 1865 to 1871. Technicians and craftsmen increasingly immigrated in the next wave of immigration from 1880 to 1885, which was prompted by hunger and disease in the Bohemian villages. A final wave of immigration of the Bohemian people occurred between 1900 and 1908 and again beginning in 1912 only to be cut off by the hostilities of World War I. The Bohemians in Wisconsin settled anywhere that Germans or Czechs settled in the 19th century such as Milwaukee, La Crosse, Manitowoc County, and Marshfield and Wood counties. The first generation to arrive came for land, freedom and opportunity and they aspired to recreate the life they had known (Meter and Paulson, 1993:14-15, 18-23).

A number of the German-Bohemian founding members of St. Ann's parish immigrated in the early 1880s from the south central European border region of Bohemia and Bavaria. Although Josef Thums, Anton Wudi, Josef Obowa, Thomas Seidel and Aloys Seidel were reported in the U.S. Census of 1900 as immigrating from Germany and Austria while only Josef Dums was recorded as originating from Bohemia, the descendants report that all these men, except Josef Dums, immigrated from the settlement of Seewiesen located south of Rothenbaum in the Bohmerwald region of western Bohemia. Josef Dums and his family were reported to have immigrated from

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 11

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

the community of Hammern located a short distance northwest of Seewiesen (U.S. Census, 1900; Dums, Interview, 1995). The Bohmerwald is the Bohemian forest region stretching along the Bohemian-Bavarian border between Furth-im-Wald and Eisenstein near the Bohemian provincial capitals of Neumark and Neuem. The community of Seewiesen, actually an area comprised of approximately 23 hamlets spread over 45 square kilometers located approximately 18 kilometers from the Bavaria border, is a farming area on a high mountain range characterized by rugged, wooded areas. As early as the year 1697, the residents of Seewiesen received permission to build a chapel honoring St. Ann [Anna], which was reconstructed 13 years later as a stone church with two belltowers. The parish history gives the language of the people and the schools as German in 1862 as well as in 1918. The German residents of Seewiesen moved mainly to Bavaria when they were expelled by the Czech government in 1945 ("Glaube and Heimat," 1990:14-15, 1992:16).

The founding members of St. Ann's parish traveled westward in the early 1880s on the Wisconsin Central Railroad to Taylor County where some of them stayed temporarily at the immigrant house located at Chelsea. The Josef Thums, Thomas Seidel, Aloys Seidel, Anton Wudi, and the Phillip Haider families who arrived in 1881 were followed by the Josef Dums and Joseph Obowa families in 1882 and the Henry Brehm and Lawrence Thums families in 1883. These immigrants, several of whom owned businesses or worked at a skilled trade in Bohemia, purchased land, generally from the Wisconsin Central Railroad, next to each other in what was then woodland. A number of the men worked in the logging camps to pay the mortgages on their land. Although they worked in the logging camps, they identified themselves in the U.S. Census as farmers. The German and Austrian settlers first cleared a few acres of their land on which they built homes, grazed a few cattle and oxen, and raised most of their produce much as they did in their old country and later took up farming more intensively. The German and Austrian immigrants, seeking to have a church at the center of their community as in their homeland, held their first organizational meeting on October 30, 1887. Present at the meeting at the home of Wenzel Thums were George Karl, John Karl, Lawrence Thums, Joseph Dums, Aloys Seidel, Josef Probst, Peter Monheim, Joseph Obowa, Anton Wudi, Phillip Haider, Henry Brehm, Joseph Diefenbacher, Anton Bernsteiner and Mrs. Carl Rothmann. A committee of three -- Thomas Seidel and Josef Thums, both German-Bohemian immigrants, and Joseph Niggemann, a German immigrant -- were elected to ask Father Ritz of Medford to petition the Bishop of the La Crosse diocese for permission to build a church at Greenwood (Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; U.S. Census, 1900; Dums, Interview, 1995).

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section  8  Page  12

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

Following the approval of the La Crosse Diocese, a frame church was built by the parishioners and a cemetery was established on an one-acre site donated earlier in 1884 by the Wisconsin Central Railroad. The Gothic Revival-influenced church, completely surrounded by a grove of hemlock trees, was completed by the fall of 1888 and the first mass was celebrated on September 25, 1888. The group chose the name St. Ann for their new church, the name of the church they had left behind in Seewiesen (Abstract of Deed, Vol. 15:53; Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Dums, Interview, 1994).

St. Ann's Catholic Church was incorporated into the La Crosse Diocese on January 10, 1898 and was reincorporated into the Diocese of Superior in 1907. St. Ann's functioned as a mission church from the time it was established in 1888 until it closed in 1963. For the first nine years (1888-1891) of its existence as a mission parish, St. Ann's Catholic Church was served by the priests assigned to Holy Rosary Church of Medford. Church services including mass, baptisms and funerals were held on one weekend a month for the first fourteen years and a prayer meeting lead by one of the parishioners was conducted on the remaining Sundays. The first burials in the cemetery occurred a few months before the church was completed in September 1887 and in February 1888. The first baptism was recorded in 1887 before the church was constructed as well. From 1897 until 1902, the St. Ann's mission church was ministered to successively by the Catholic churches of Marathon City, Athens, and Colby. St. Ann's became a mission of Rib Lake in 1902 when a rectory was built there. In 1941, the responsibility of St. Ann's, along with the other mission parishes located at Westboro, Whittlesey, Chelsea and Rib Lake, was transferred to the Fathers of the Society of Precious Blood. This Catholic order of priest ministered to St Ann's until the church was closed by the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior in 1963 because of a lack of priest as well as the close proximity of other Catholic churches. For the last three years, St. Ann's was a mission of St. Teresa's in Westboro. St. Ann's parish, comprised of approximately 20 to 30 families when it was established in 1888, served 48 families when it closed. The family names of Dums, Fuchs, Haider, Karl, Thums and Wudi that were evident when St. Ann's was constructed in the late 1880s, also made up a large part of the congregation when it closed in 1963. St. Ann's parish was divided among the Catholic parishes at Rib Lake, Chelsea, and Whittlesey (Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; Medford Star News, August 1963, 15 March 1979; Dums, "Memories,"; Dums. Interview, 1994).

It took many years for this small group to furnish their small church with the traditional embellishments and icons used in the liturgical rituals of their religion and culture. Major improvements, most of which were donated by, installed

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 13

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

or built by the parishioners of St. Ann's include the original pews constructed by parishioner Josef Thums, installation of three iron bells in the belfry that were manufactured by the Blymyer Norton Company of Cincinnati in 1892, an organ installed in 1893, the addition of the ornate high altar purchased from the Hackner Altar Company of La Crosse in 1899 and the side altars also from the Hackner Company donated by Kate Karl and Josef Thums c.1908, the statue of St. Peter donated by Mrs. Lyle and the St. Paul statue donated by the parishioners in the early 20th century, and the stained glass in the windows donated by various parishioners and installed by parishioners John and Lawrence Obowa in 1910. In the 1930s, improvements included the excavation of the basement by the parishioners followed by the construction of a basement under the church and the sculptured plaques depicting the stations of the cross were donated by parishioner Kate Karl. New pews were installed in the early 1940s and electric power was added in 1946 to fuel the lights wired previously in the 1930s. Many elaborate artifacts used in the church liturgy such as vestments, candleholders, monstrance, missal holder, incense burner and vigil light purchased or donated by the parishioners remain in the church (Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:8-10; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; (Dums, "Memories,"; Dums, Interview, 1994).

The traditions of the Bohemian and German Catholic cultures were re-created in America to the extent possible, enriching the social and religious life of St. Ann's parish. The language of the parishioners was German and the cultural influences were essentially Germanic in origin. The sermons and church rituals, other than those for which the Latin language was obligatory, were conducted in German until the beginning of World War I. The German inscriptions recording the donors and the German inscription on the parish banner are artifacts from this period. During Rev. Heeger of Rib Lake's ministry of St Ann's, the traditional religious ceremony of Corpus Christi was re-created in 1902. In the beginning, the three altars used in the ceremonial procession that carried the Blessed Sacrament were placed one-half mile east, one-fourth mile west and in the church or on the church lawn. Toward the end of St. Ann's existence, the outdoor altars were all located on the church grounds. The traditional celebration of Corpus Christi ceased with the closing of the church in 1963. Music, which was the center of every German-Bohemian celebration, was among the first of the old world customs realized in the shaping of their community life in Wisconsin. St. Ann's Church band, organized in the late 1890s by Henry Mueller, enlivened the Corpus Christi celebration with their music as well as many other special occasions in the area for approximately 15 years. The gatherings of the congregation, which occurred generally in conjunction with a religious occasion, was hosted by the St. Ann's Altar Society. Established soon after construction of the church, the women of the Altar Society accepted the

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 14

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

traditional responsibility of cleaning the church and arranged for the flowers on the altars. In addition, the Altar Society served parish dinners at the Corpus Christi festivity and other parish events such as the annual celebration of the feast day of St. Ann, and in the fall of the year. Responsibility for St Ann's was also taken on by the men of the parish, particularly as trustees of the parish corporation; however, a formal organization under the name of the Holy Name Society was not established until 1962. In addition, a parish bulletin published weekly beginning in 1951, kept the congregation informed of the activities and proceedings of the parish. The social interaction of the St. Ann's congregation in the early years was facilitated by the location of the area school adjacent to the west side of the church property and the establishment of the Joseph Thums General Store and U.S. Post Office across the road [north]. Informal social interaction of the German-Bohemian congregation often occurred at the Thums General Store on Sunday morning after the church service while the children were in Sunday school (Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1963:7-11; Catholic Herald Citizen, 14 August 1954; (Dums, "Memories,"; Dums, Interview, 1994, 1995; Star News, 5 August 1992).

The preservation of St Ann's Church and its ethnic heritage has been undertaken by Historic St. Ann's Incorporated, an organization formed in 1987 to accept the deed and the ensuing responsibility of the church building and cemetery from the Diocese of Superior. The organization was incorporated with 23 charter members on July 24, 1987 under the name Historic St. Ann's Incorporated. Repair and restoration of the church began immediately after the deed was turned over in July 1988 with the construction of a new basement and a centennial celebration of its original construction. Since its formation in 1987, the Historic St. Ann's organization has stabilized and repaired the church building. Furthermore, they have planned for the maintenance and use of the building as a memorial to their ancestors thereby promoting the preservation of their unique German-Bohemian heritage. In addition to its status as a historic site, St. Ann's Church building is used for social events, meetings and concerts (Star News, 15 March 1979; 9 November 1983, 11 May 1983, 10 June 1987, 6 July 1988, 31 August 1988, 1 March 1989, 9 May 1990, 20 June 1990, 5 August 1992; Catholic Herald, 4 August 1988, 15 September 1988; Dums, Interview, 1994).

St. Ann's Catholic Church and Cemetery are significant representatives of the German-Bohemian and German settlement and culture in the town of Greenwood. The construction of a church, which traditionally was the center of their social and religious life, was among the primary concerns of this small group of immigrants soon after their arrival in America. This representative of the heritage of the

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 15

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

German and German-Bohemian community has been preserved by the descendants of the original settlers. St. Ann's Cemetery, which contains many of the graves of the original parishioners, also is associated with the history and culture of the early settlers of Greenwood township. It contains several grave markers that display characteristics of grave markers in the cemeteries of Bohemia and Austria.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATION A

St. Ann's Catholic Church is an exception to Criteria A because it is nominated for its association with the traditional cultural values of the German-Bohemian settlers of the town of Greenwood in Taylor County and for its architectural significance as a representative of the Gothic Revival influence in the late 19th century. St. Ann's Church cemetery is an integral part of this historic property and contributes to its historic significance as a representative of the ethnic German-Bohemian early settlers of the area.



NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

Bibliography

Agri-View, 24 March 1989.

Bicha, Karel. "The Czechs in America," Wisconsin Magazine of History Vol. 53  
(Spring 1970).

Catholic Herald Citizen 14 August 1954, 4 August 1988, 15 September 1988.

Diamond Jubilee of St. Ann's Church, 1888-1963. Township of Greenwood: n.p., 1963.

Directory of Zion Lutheran Church, Stetsonville, WI. n.p., 1985.

Dums, Irene. Assumption BVM Catholic Church, 1887-1989. Greenwood (WI): n.p., 1989.

Dums, Irene and Dums, James, ED. "Memories of St. Ann's." n.p., n.d.

Dums, Irene and Dums, James. W4182 Brehm Avenue, Rib Lake, Wisconsin. Interview,  
26 April 1994, 27 October 1994, 20 January 1995.

Glaube and Heimat [Faith and Homeland], March 1990, April 1991, February, 1992.

Greenwood, Wisconsin. "History of St. Ann's Church." n.p., n.d.

Greenwood, Wisconsin. Irene and James Dums. Abstract of Property, St. Ann's  
Catholic Church, Town of Greenwood, Taylor County Deeds Vol.15:53, Vol.13:129,  
Vol.19:207, Vol.120:632.

Greenwood, Wisconsin. Irene and James Dums. Articles of Incorporation, St Ann's  
Catholic Congregation of the Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, 1907.

Heming, H. Catholic Church in Wisconsin. Milwaukee: Catholic Historical Publishing  
Company, 1895-98.

Historic St. Ann's Incorporated. "Newsletter," 1989, 1991, 1993.

"Historic St. Ann's Self Guided Tour." n.p., n.d.

Historical Album, 1874-1974 Centennial, Medford Area. n.p., 1974.

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

History of Northern Wisconsin Chicago: The Western Historical Company, 1881.

La Crosse Tribune and Leader Press, 9 October 1927.

Latton, Arthur J. Reminiscences and Anecdotes of early Taylor County n.p., 1947.

Medford (WI) Star News, 27 July 1963, 15 March 1979, 11 May 1983, 9 November 1983,  
10 June 1987, 6 July 1988, 31 August 1988, 1 March 1989, 9 May 1990, 5 August  
1992, 25 May 1994.

Meter, Ken and Paulson, Robert. Border People: The Bohmisch (German-Bohemians) in  
America. Minneapolis: Crossroads Resource Center and New Ulm (WI): German  
-Bohemian Heritage Society, 1993.

Milwaukee Sentinel, 26 May 1994.

Rausch, Joan and Zeitlin, Richard. Final Report Intensive Historical -  
Architectural Survey, City of La Crosse. La Crosse (WI): 1984.

United States Department of the Interior, Census Office. MS population schedule for  
Taylor County, Wisconsin. La Crosse: La Crosse City Library, 1900.

Wyatt, Barbara, ED. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin (Vol. I, II).  
Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986.

Zeitlin, Richard. Germans in Wisconsin. Madison: State Historical Society of  
Wisconsin, 1977.

NPS Form 10-900a  
(Rev. 8-86)  
Wisconsin Word Processor Format  
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

St. Ann's Catholic Church  
Town of Greenwood, Taylor County, Wisconsin

---

**10. Geographical Data**

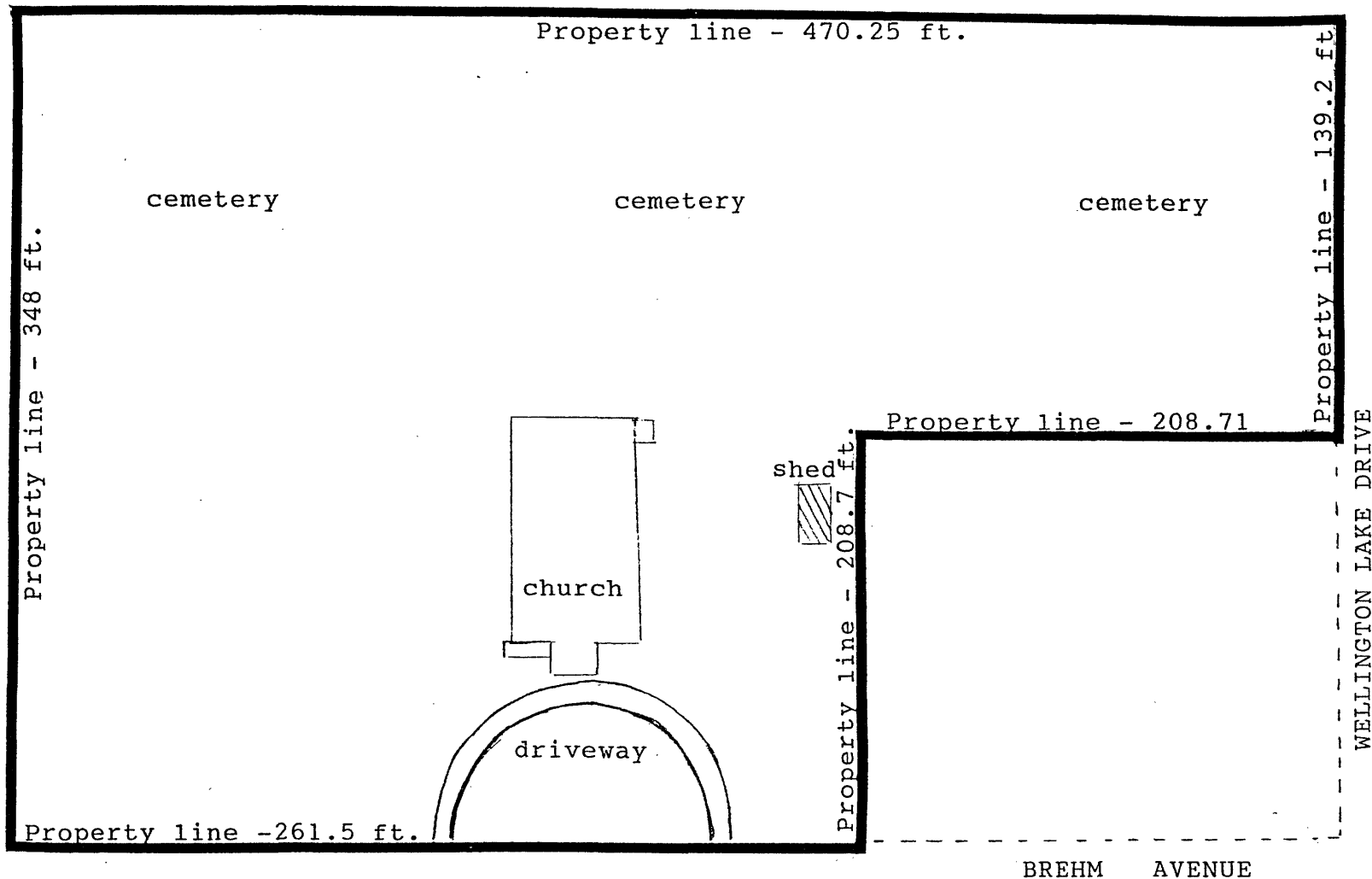
---

**Verbal Boundary Description**


Located in Greenwood Township: NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 9, Township 32 North.  
The general area is L-shaped, commencing at the southwest corner of St. Ann's Cemetery and Wellington Lake Drive, then east 470.25 feet along the rear of the cemetery, then north 348 feet along the east property line to the south edge right of way along Brehm Avenue, then west 261.5 feet along the front property boundary and the south edge of the Brehm Avenue right of way, then south 298.7 feet along the west church property line, then west 208.7 feet to the intersection of the church property with Wellington Lake Drive, then 139.2 feet to the point of beginning.


**Boundary Justification**

The boundary lines of the St. Ann's Catholic Church property include all the property and buildings associated with St. Ann's at the present time.



LEGEND

Property Boundary 

Non-contributing 

Not to Scale



SKETCH MAP

ST ANN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CEMETERY  
43963 Brehm Avenue

Town of Greenwood, Taylor Co., Wisconsin