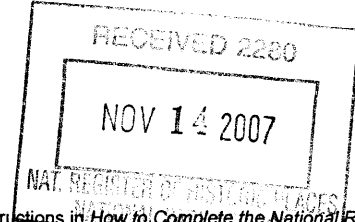


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1317

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Log Cabin
other names/site number Club Tara, Club Tara Hideaway, Phil's Tara Hideaway

2. Location

street & number 15021 60th Street N. not for publication N/A
city or town Oak Park Heights vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county Washington code 163 zip code 55082

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 11/2/07
Signature of certifying official Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Minnesota Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

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 or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature] _____ Date of Action 12-27-07
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall

Log Cabin
Name of Property

Washington County, MN
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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(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structure
		objects
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)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Log Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, stone
walls wood

roof metal
other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1932-1938

Significant Dates

1932

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by survey, recorded by engineering.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Log Cabin
Name of Property

Washington County, MN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Stillwater, Minn.-Wisc.
1967, Revised 1993

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Carole S. Zellie</u>	date	<u>4/16/07</u>
organization	<u>Landscape Research LLC</u>	telephone	<u>651-641-1230</u>
street and number	<u>1466 Hythe St.</u>	city or town	<u>St. Paul</u>
city or town	<u>St. Paul</u>	state	<u>MN</u>
		zip code	<u>55108</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name	_____	telephone	_____
street & number	_____	city or town	_____
city or town	_____	state	_____
		zip code	_____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Log Cabin

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Description

The Log Cabin (1932) is located on the south side of 60th Street N., approximately one-quarter mile east of Osgood Street. This street is a dead-ended frontage road parallel to Trunk Highway (TH) 36, and the building is isolated from other development and set at the edge of a wooded ravine. The Log Cabin is situated below the grade of the highway. Despite suburban shopping mall and apartment construction to the west and across TH 36, the setting remains somewhat evocative of a hideaway, one of the property's past and present names. A narrow band of mature cottonwood and elm frames the building to the east and south, and the rest of the property is a gravel parking lot.

The one-story building faces north with a view of the TH 36 embankment. It has a roughly rectangular plan measuring 25 by 50 feet. There are also two small, flat-roofed additions at the rear of the original gable-roofed log structure. The original building rests on a concrete, cobblestone-faced foundation. Cobblestone also faces the east foundation wall around a basement entry leading to a partial cellar. The metal-clad roof shelters a shallow crawlspace and the eaves have exposed rafter ends. The gable ends are clad in square-cut, wood shingles. All trim is painted green. A wide, random-coursed, cobblestone chimney at the west wall has a single stack and a concrete cap. Another single brick chimney rises from the rear roof slope.

Each wall of the historic log exterior is comprised of 13 peeled, round pine logs that vary in diameter from 5 to 10 inches. The chinking between the logs is epoxy-based. The saddle joints at each corner have extensions of approximately 12 inches.

At the north facade, a projecting gable-roofed log entry is centrally located between pairs of casement sash. The entry shelters a single-leaf wood door and has a narrow band of fixed windows on each wall. Wood casement sash fills the wall of the dining room on the east elevation of the main building, and there are also two small fixed windows at the rear restrooms. Pairs of casement windows flank the chimney on the west elevation. Wood casement windows at the south elevation provide views of the ravine. Most of the windows were installed in the 1950s and are scheduled for replacement.

A one-story, flat-roofed addition housing the kitchen wraps around the rear west side and part of the south side of the original log structure. The exterior is clad in modern half-log siding. It has a single service door and ventilation hoods. There is a small flat-roofed wing at the rear of the east side, also clad in modern half-log siding, which contains a service entry with a modern door. A deck on the west side of the building is a recent addition. There are also several small storage sheds of recent date.

A metal sign pole at the northeast edge of the property supports a modern backlit advertising sign. Metal cutout letters that spell "TARA" are applied to the pole. The date of construction is unknown.

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The Log Cabin exterior retains a high level of historic integrity. The original log construction and workmanship remain evident on the principal facades of the building. Despite past TH 36 expansion, the building also retains excellent integrity of location, setting, feeling and association.

Interior

The Log Cabin interior is divided into the north-facing main dining room and bar and a rear dining room. The kitchen at the southwest corner and its attached wing was rebuilt after a 1970 fire. Two small restrooms and a small office are placed along the east wall of the rear dining room. The main dining room has round log walls that have been peeled and varnished. The high ceiling is paneled in wood and the floors are maple. The fireplace on the west wall has a cobblestone-clad surround and shallow mantel. The focal point of the main dining room is the bar, which is placed on the south end of the room in front of a full-length mirror and below a stamped tin ceiling of recent date. The bar is a varnished wood slab supported by a wood cabinet. The rear dining room has paneled walls.

The Log Cabin interior retains a high degree of historic integrity, although anecdotal accounts suggest that the historic interior was quite dark, with unpeeled logs. The present varnished, peeled logs provide a warm appearance more in keeping with the present restaurant use than that of the past roadhouse-nightclub.

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The Log Cabin is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the development of the early 20th-century roadhouse in the St. Croix Valley. The building is locally significant as representative of such businesses that served an automobile culture, often in isolated settings. The building is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture because it represents a type of iconic log cabin design that advertised its uniqueness as a place of entertainment and refreshment.

The period of significance is 1932-38, which marks the construction and ownership of the building by Oak Park resident Gerald Lynch and includes the repeal of Prohibition; during Prohibition such roadhouses were popular for offering entertainment and illegal alcohol.

Property History

Gerald R. (Whitey) Lynch and his brother Eugene were natives of Oak Park, a village located at the southern edge of Stillwater. In 1929 they established Lynch's Chicken Shack on the site of the present Log Cabin.¹ There is little record of this early business, but when the shack burned in May 1932, Gerald Lynch—and possibly Eugene—immediately rebuilt and within about six months reopened a new business called the Log Cabin.² The location along what was then known as TH 45 was part of a popular route linking the Twin Cities and St. Croix Valley towns. TH 45 was paved by 1924 as part of the state trunk highway system. By 1934 it was known as TH 36.³ In the late 1950s the roadway was reconstructed at a higher grade, and the old road became a frontage road.

Lynch may have planned the new building as a gasoline station. According to a rental contract with the Texas Company, he was to earn one-half cent per gallon sold on the premises. Although the contract described a grease pit and other service station equipment, there is no other information about the station, and gasoline does not appear to have been sold for long, if at all.⁴

Instead, the Log Cabin served as a popular roadhouse or, as it was later called, a nightclub.⁵ Although the business opened near the end of Prohibition, illegal liquor was initially offered, perhaps in the basement, and anecdotal accounts recorded on recent menus and repeated in local newspaper articles note the Log Cabin's role in the informal network of gangster stops during the 1930s when St. Paul enjoyed a national reputation for crime. The network extended to roadhouses and lodging on nearby

¹ "American Revolution Bicentennial Club Tara Hideway (sic), Stillwater," advertisement in Barbara Beving Long, *Cultural Resource Investigation, T.H. 36 and Stillwater/Houlton Bridge Project* (Prepared for Minnesota Department of Transportation, 1994), Fig. 5. This advertisement provides the only evidence of the Chicken Shack partnership of Gerald and Eugene Lynch. It calls the Chicken Shack a nightclub.

² "Big property loss in weekend fires," *Stillwater News*, 6 May, 1932. See also Long, 17.

³ Long, 19.

⁴ Long, 18.

⁵ "Rob log cabin of furnishings valued at \$677," *Stillwater Gazette* 18 Feb. 1937, 1.

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Log Cabin

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White Bear Lake and elsewhere in the St. Croix Valley.⁶ Visits by Al Capone, John Dillinger, and others are part of the lore repeated in newspaper articles. In the 1930s, a liquor saleswoman, Marie Redman, was reportedly held hostage in the Log Cabin basement by her kidnapper, a Stillwater resident.⁷

In February 1933, in anticipation of the end of Prohibition, Gerald and Nettie Lynch obtained a \$400 mortgage from the Theo. Hamm Brewing Company.⁸ The company's support for the establishment is evident in a 1939 photograph that shows a large Hamm's sign mounted on the roof, dwarfing the structure while attracting the attention of motorists. On April 7, 1933 the 21st Amendment was ratified. The previous day Washington County legalized the sale of beer, allowing hotels, restaurants, drugstores and clubs to receive licenses. By April 13 more than a dozen Stillwater businesses sold beer for consumption on or off the premises and took out a newspaper advertisement in celebration.⁹ The advertisement reminded that "Happy Days are Here Again . . . Now! Enjoy Real Beer." The Log Cabin, outside the city limits, was not listed.

An account of the likely evening activity at the Log Cabin was provided after a robbery in 1937. The thieves were seeking slot machines but found none. Among stolen equipment and supplies were an "electric phonograph and records, a Bohn refrigerator, 20 cartons of cigarettes, 10 tablecloths, peanuts, gum, and some money."¹⁰ The Lynch family apparently lived in the rear portion of the building. In 1939, after the building was sold, Lynch built a new residence in Oak Park.¹¹

Gerald R. Lynch (1905-unknown), who was apparently known as Whitey, was born to parents of Irish descent. John Lynch, his father, was a railroad section man, and an older brother, Cames, was a guard at Stillwater State Prison. Although the Chicken Shack was reportedly established in 1929, in 1930 the federal census located Lynch, his wife, and young son living in Detroit in a Polish and Lithuanian neighborhood where he operated a confectionary store.¹² Nettie Lynch (1910-unknown) was of Polish descent and was a Michigan native. By 1932 they were back in Oak Park, where other members of the family lived. According to some accounts, Gerald's brother Eugene (1900-unknown) was a partner in the Log Cabin.¹³ Lynch may have had other employment—he is listed under "Beverages-Retail" in the 1942 Stillwater directory— but Gerald, Nettie, and Eugene are untraceable after 1942.¹⁴

⁶ See Paul Maccabee, *John Dillinger Slept Here* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1995), for an account of the geography of 1930s St. Paul area criminal activity; "When St. Paul wallowed in sea of crime," *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 3 Dec. 1967.

⁷ "Plenty of good history," *Stillwater Evening Gazette*, 14 Sept. 1987, 5.

⁸ Mortgage No. 11336, Book 32, p. 149, Washington County Auditor's Office, Stillwater, Minnesota.

⁹ "Happy Days are Here Again," *Stillwater Post-Messenger* 13 April 1933, n.p.; "Local, federal licenses needed," *Stillwater Post-Messenger*, 3.

¹⁰ "Rob log cabin of furnishings valued at \$677," *Stillwater Gazette* 18 Feb. 1937,1; Long, 19.

¹¹ "\$100,000 spent here on home, industrial building," *Stillwater Weekly Gazette*, 24 August 1939, 2.

¹² 1930 U.S. Census, Population Schedule. Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, Enumeration District 82-492, 5A-B.

¹³ "American Revolution Bicentennial 1876-1976" advertisement in Long, Fig. 5.

¹⁴ *Stillwater, Minnesota Directory* 1941-1942.

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In 1938, Lynch sold the business to Nick J. Michels, who operated a restaurant and served beer. He retained the Log Cabin name.¹⁵ By 1946, Herbert M. Thiessen purchased the property and changed the business name to Club Tara Hideaway.¹⁶ Herbert and Vi Thiessen also lived in the rear of the restaurant and served meals in the front dining room.¹⁷

In 1966 Robert W. Browning purchased the property and called it Club Tara. He expanded the menu and converted the former living quarters to a dining room. The business was sold to a group of investors in ca. 1994. They sold it in ca. 1996 to Ryszard Biernacki, a Polish immigrant from Chicago. Biernacki experienced various legal problems during his ownership.¹⁸ There was a short-lived proposal to convert the building to a boarding kennel, but Phil Barbatsis, the present owner, purchased the property in 1997 and completed a restoration of the structure. He operates it as a restaurant known as "Phil's Tara Hideaway."¹⁹

Until the 1950s, the Log Cabin was one of only a few businesses dispersed along TH 36 between Stillwater, Oak Park, and North St. Paul. During the 1950s and 1960s, new construction along the north and south sides of TH 36 included apartment buildings, the St. Croix Valley shopping mall, and scattered strip development.

Significance

The Roadhouse in the Prohibition Era

The Log Cabin represents the tradition of the early 20th-century roadhouse as well as that of the log cabin, a popular and iconic architectural form of the same period. The building has served various roadhouse functions, ranging from Prohibition-era, dwelling-plus-tavern to a well-furnished supper club.

A "roadhouse" is most commonly a tavern, inn, or nightclub placed at the edge of the city or in the country. In the early 20th century, gasoline, food, and entertainment were often provided, but often with limited hours.²⁰ "Chicken shacks" in this period provided family-style chicken dinners, but during Prohibition (1920-1933), the term was sometimes used to describe an establishment that offered bootleg liquor. An Oak Park native offered an analysis of the period: "in those days if a place wasn't a chicken shack it was a roadhouse. Sometimes the word tavern came into play but taverns did not feature food.

¹⁵ Long, Fig. 5.

¹⁶ Long, Fig. 5 and Long, 19.

¹⁷ "Plenty of good history," *Stillwater Evening Gazette*, 14 Sept. 1987, 5.

¹⁸ "Club Tara has new owners," 3 April 1996 *Stillwater Gazette*, 6; "Conviction shakes Club Tara," *Stillwater Gazette* 9 June 1997, 1.

¹⁹ Long, Fig 5; "Club Tara might become a kennel," *Stillwater Evening Gazette*, 8 September 1997, 1; "Tara's stories continue," *Stillwater Gazette* 6 Jan 1998, 8.

²⁰ Long, 16.

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Eventually after dark places became night clubs and supper clubs.”²¹ The term speakeasy, where liquor could be obtained illegally, was also used to describe to some establishments or back rooms.

Writing about such roadside buildings located outside city limits, Chester Liebs noted, “With fewer, if any, legal restrictions—outside of town, there was room to innovate and license to experiment. Unlike Main Street, these decentralized marketplaces usually carried little tradition of civic propriety and less imperative to ‘fit’ the rest of the community.”²² Established in Oak Park, an unincorporated township just outside the city limits of Stillwater in a fairly isolated location on then-Trunk Highway 45 (TH 36), the Log Cabin was perfectly situated to function at the edge of legal restrictions as a destination roadhouse, providing food and entertainment. According to local anecdote, it was also a source of bootleg liquor.

In some cities, roadhouses attracted the attention of social reformers. For example, a 1929 article in *The Survey* (a social reform publication of the Charity Organization Society of New York) noted “171 roadhouses in 52 communities within a radius of some twenty-five miles of Chicago.”²³ Such establishments were particularly problematic, the author noted, when they were located outside city limits: “There was a time when city dance-halls were as dangerous to boys and girls as the roadhouses of today through a tie-up with the vice and liquor interests. They have been brought under supervision, by and large, but through the automobile their old problems have been widened out beyond the cities where control by parents, authorities and public opinion is even more difficult than in the cities themselves.”²⁴ A letter to the editor of *American City*, submitted by George L. Stansbury, Chairman of the Guilford County, North Carolina, Board of Commissioners, highlighted the need for regulation of roadhouses, even after Prohibition ended: “Experience in Guilford County, N.C., has shown that the licensing of tourist camps and roadhouses outside city limits is the most effective way of regulating lawless and boisterous conduct in these places.”²⁵

The early years of the Log Cabin are documented primarily by anecdote. The few newspaper references to the building and its predecessor, however, are framed by other articles that confirm the crime surrounding bootleg liquor and roadhouse establishments. For example, on May 6, 1932, when the Chicken Shack fire was reported in the *Stillwater News*, another article noted “Booze Runners Arrested Here: 130 Gallons of Moon Confiscated.”²⁶ On February 18, 1937, when the Log Cabin robbery was featured, other *Stillwater News* articles described robberies in roadhouses along Stillwater Road in St. Paul and in Somerset, Wisconsin. The Log Cabin was apparently one of many roadhouse establishments operated around Minneapolis and St. Paul and was part of a network of sorts that extended to Chicago and beyond. One observer noted of the period 1925-1935, “St. Paul was about as wide open a town can

²¹ Bob Utecht, “Club Tara Roadhouse: Wow, what a history,” *St. Croix Valley Weekender*, 18-22 January 1995, 4.

²² Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1995), 43.

²³ Mary Ross, “Blowing on the flame of youth,” *The Survey* 63 (December 1, 1929), 292.

²⁴ Ross, 308.

²⁵ George L. Stansbury, “Regulation of roadhouses,” *American City* 53 (September 1938), 17.

²⁶ “Booze Runners Arrested Here,” *Stillwater News* 6 May 1932, 1.

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get without falling completely apart at the seams. Speakeasies by the hundreds dotted the landscape, offering bands, food, dancing, and bootleg booze.”²⁷

The Log Cabin and Roadside Architecture

The builder of the Log Cabin has not been identified. The materials were readily available in what had been a center of the state’s lumber industry, and many varieties of log cabin designs were widely published. The building was well constructed above its partial basement and withstood years of hard use.

The Log Cabin combined domestic, regional and popular imagery in a commercial building placed in an isolated setting. Since the early 20th century, roadside architecture has often been designed to attract motorists. Liebs, for example, notes, “outside the central business districts, the new vehicles prompted a marriage of architecture and advertising, a blend of building and sign, far beyond any sales campaign envisioned downtown.”²⁸ Unlike the fantastic roadside architecture—outsized milk cans, ducks and the like—which “visually shout(ed): slow down, pull in and buy,” however, the Log Cabin belongs to quieter categories of roadside architecture defined as the “domestic” and “historical.”²⁹

The house, cottage, or cabin delivered “deep-rooted symbolic value.”³⁰ In the 1920s and 1930s, especially —“ along with the popularity of flappers, cigarettes, and speakeasies”—a strong societal longing for tradition continued.³¹ Gerald Lynch’s Log Cabin fits Liebs’ model, one representative of “commercially exploitable historical and regional images” that were based on “widely recognized ‘pictures’ that had stirred the popular imagination—from log cabins to tepees—already embedded in the public’s mind . . .”³²

Historians of 20th-century travel note that the early automobile tourism industry sought to retain a quality of quaint, pre-industrial innocence, often symbolized by the log cabin. In addition to representing a lost, longed-for past, the log cabin was also representative of a history of frontier hospitality.³³ Of particular interest for Gerald Lynch’s round-log Log Cabin is the observation that “tourists visited sites where log buildings were a dominant image: Valley Forge, various Lincoln cabins, Gettysburg Battlefield with its log Meade headquarters. The building of the Lincoln Highway during the 1920s and

²⁷ “Speakeasy hinges never rusted,” *St. Paul Sunday Pioneer Press*, 3 Dec. 1967, 28.

²⁸ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 43.

²⁹ Liebs, 5.

³⁰ Liebs, 44.

³¹ Liebs, 45.

³² Liebs, 50–51.

³³ Rachael Ann Bottorff, “Log cabin hospitality on the Illinois frontier,” *Western Illinois Regional Studies*, vol. 9, n. 2 (1986), 36–46.

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the depression of the 1930s gave rise to a new phenomenon, the tourist cabin, and many of these were single units built of round logs.”³⁴

Although pioneer log cabins were often constructed of hewn logs, whitewashed and even clad with shingles or clapboards, the tourist and recreational log cabins that were popular in the early 20th century were typically constructed of round logs (or half-round logs). They were left exposed—outside and inside—to reveal their authenticity.³⁵ Historian Mac E. Barrick observed, “On a national level, the appearance of the round-log cabin coincides with a final awareness that the Western frontier has disappeared. Building a log cabin is a symbolic act of creation that mythically reenacts settlement on that frontier.”³⁶ In that context, the log cabin became a popular choice for lodges constructed in national and state parks. Both the enormous Old Faithful Inn (1904) built in Yellowstone National Park and the small recreational cabins (1935) built in Minnesota state parks such as Itasca by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)—among others around the nation—were created to express the idea and image of the log cabin, rather than its historical reality.

The log cabin was translated into gas station, roadhouse, and commercial building design in the 1920s and 1930s, but there was great interest among Americans to acquire their own log cabin. This was often a vacation home, but the log aesthetic could also be imported through furniture and decorative arts. Throughout this period, magazine articles, plan books, and extension bulletins extolled the virtues of the log cabin. One representative article, published in *American Home*, described the lure of the log cabin: “Those of us who love to get close to Mother Nature feel that we are most nearly achieving our ideal when we live and sleep in a log cabin. Vacation days, spent in this type of dwelling, seem utterly removed from our workaday life. Even in the vicinity of New York City one finds log cabins used as week-end retreats . . .”³⁷ While modern pioneers sought to recreate the image of the frontier log cabin, most articles and books reveal that they were not always keen to recreate the rough reality of the frontier log cabin. One guide to log cabin life in the twentieth century, *The Real Log Cabin* (1928), cautioned, “Remember that our forebears utilized logs because they had no other choice. We utilize logs because they are our first choice. Pioneering has become an art instead of a duty.”³⁸ The author, Chilson D. Aldrich, went on to say of the originals, “They are quaint—but aren’t they a bit severe and unhappy about it? Haven’t they a sort of all-work-and-no-play puritanism about ‘em?”³⁹

Magazine articles emphasized that comfort need not be sacrificed to the aesthetic of the log cabin. An article in *House & Garden* in May 1929 promised “A pioneer house with plumbing: A log cabin,

³⁴ Barrick, 8–9.

³⁵ See, for example, C. A. Weslager, *The Log Cabin in America: From Pioneer Days to the Present* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969); Douglass C. Reed, *Log Cabin Mythology* (Hagerstown, MD: Creative Printing, 1977).

³⁶ Mac E. Barrick, “The log cabin as cultural symbol,” *Material Culture*, vol. 18, n. 1 (1986), 15.

³⁷ George H. Dacy, “The lure of the log cabin,” *American Home* 4 (August, 1930), 495.

³⁸ Chilson D. Aldrich, *The Real Log Cabin* (NY: Macmillan, 1928), 28.

³⁹ Aldrich, 30.

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twenty-five miles from Chicago, combines primitive outdoor features with modern indoor comfort.”⁴⁰ Another, published almost a decade later in *American Home*, argued, “Just because you are planning to spend your summer in the rusticity of a log cabin in the woods ... it doesn’t mean that you can afford to throw good taste to the winds and put up with miscellaneous furnishings long since relegated to the attic.”⁴¹ Other articles focused on how the image and aesthetic of the log cabin could be brought into everyday life. In 1932, *Popular Science* presented the “log cabin recreation room,” describing, “By using log siding—boards rounded on one side to look like pine logs stripped of bark—any home owner can transform a part of his basement or attic into what appears to be the cozy interior of a log cabin.”⁴² On a smaller scale, articles in *Popular Mechanics* and *Popular Science*, respectively, guided readers in the construction of, “An attractive log-cabin desk set and lamp” (1933) and “Log cabin bird houses,” (1934).⁴³

In Minnesota the log cabin was well embedded in the public’s imagination by the mid-1920s, and several local and regional interpretations could have inspired Lynch and his builder. In 1925, for example, the Minnesota Historical Society sponsored a demonstration of log cabin construction on the State Fair grounds. That same year, John Runk, a Stillwater photographer, displayed a diorama of a pioneer log cabin in his Main Street store window. Log cabins were crafted into service stations, most notably at the Lindquist Oil Company in Fergus Falls. A postcard of the station (1928) declared, “National tourists proclaim it the most artistic in the U.S.A.” Many public campgrounds and a number of municipal tourist camps around the state, including that at nearby Bayport (1931), also featured log cabins.

Summary

The Log Cabin (1932) is associated with an informal network of roadhouses in the St. Croix Valley that enjoyed a reputation for entertainment and bootleg liquor during Prohibition. The distinctive log architecture of the simple building added to its attraction to motorists and has sustained it as a symbol of roadside entertainment. The building exterior and interior retain a high level of historic integrity.

⁴⁰ Anne Forester, “A pioneer house with plumbing: A log cabin, twenty-five miles from Chicago, combines primitive outdoor features with modern indoor comfort,” *House & Garden* 55 (May 1929), 122.

⁴¹ “Both Sturdy and Smart,” *American Home* 17 (Feb. 1938), 37.

⁴² “Log cabin recreation room,” *Popular Science* 121 (Oct. 1932), 72.

⁴³ “An attractive log-cabin desk set and lamp,” *Popular Mechanics* 60 (November, 1933), 751; Herman Hjorth, “Log cabin bird houses, easily built from scrap lumber,” *Popular Science* 124 (April 1924), 92.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The Log Cabin occupies a portion of Sec 3 T 29 R 20 of the NW1/4-NW1/4 of Washington County, Minnesota. Commencing at a point on the southerly right of way line of Highway 212, 75 feet east of the west line of said Section 3; thence south and perpendicular to said right of way line 115 feet; thence east and parallel to said right of way 140 feet thence north at right angles to the last described line 115 feet to a point on southerly line of said right of way; thence west along said southerly right of way line 100 feet; thence west and parallel to said right of way line 100 feet; thence north at right angles to said last described line 100 feet to a point on said southerly right of way line; thence west along said right of way line 25 feet to the point of beginning; together with that part of said NW 1/4-NW/1/4 described as follows: beginning at a point in south line of said right of way 100 feet east of the west line of said tract; measuring along south line of said right of way, thence east along said line of said right of way 100 feet; thence south at right angles with the said south line 100 feet; thence west on line parallel with said south line of right of way; thence north at right angles with said last described line 100 feet to point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property historically associated with the Log Cabin.

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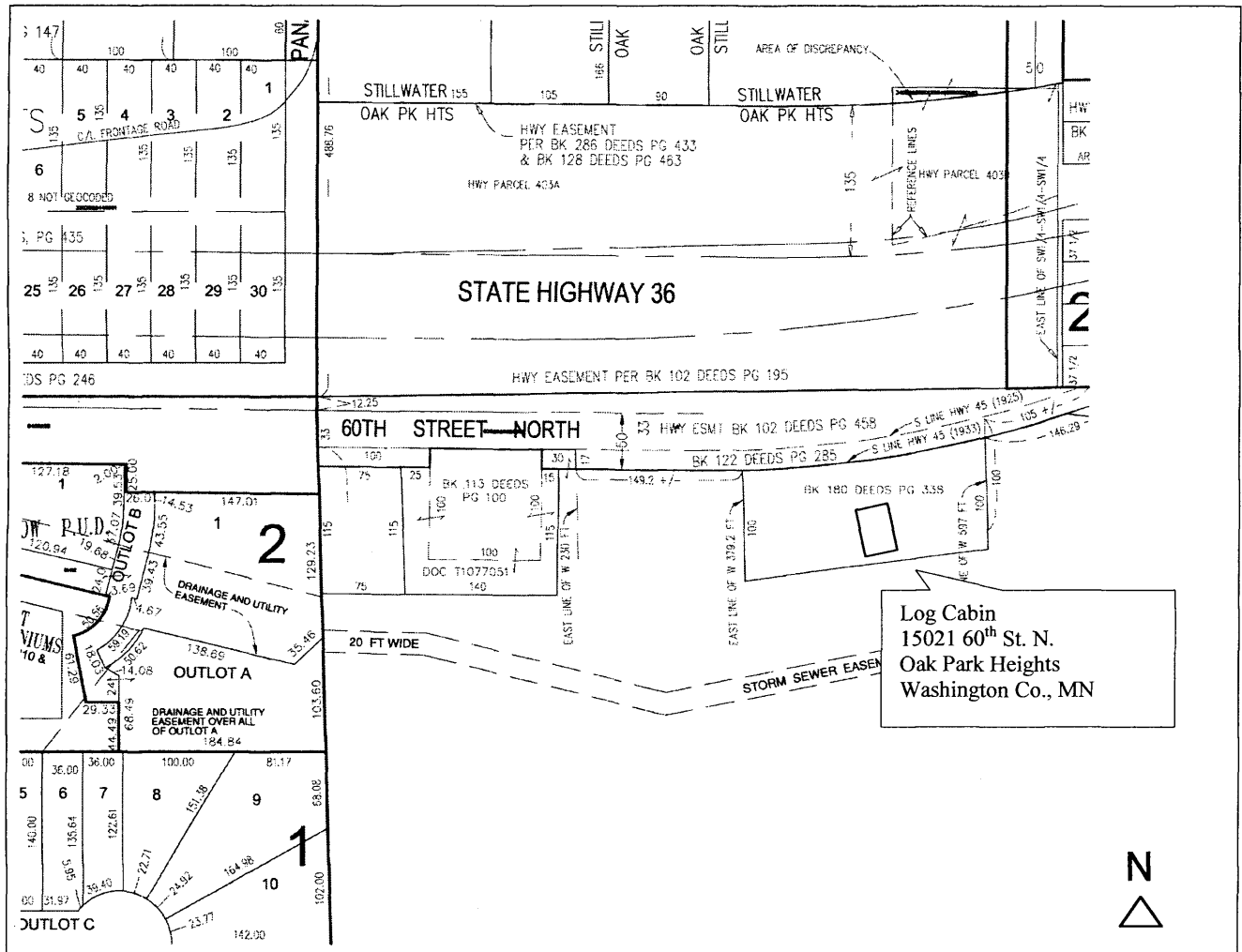
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Map 1. Log Cabin, 15021 60th Street N., Oak Park Heights, Minnesota (Source: Washington County Land Management, Stillwater, MN)

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Historic Photograph 1. Log Cabin, 15021 60th Street N., Stillwater, Minn.,
1939, looking north (Phillip Barbatis)

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Historic Photograph 2. Minnesota Historical Society log cabin on fair grounds, 1925; men stripping and peeling the logs during construction of the cabin (Minnesota Historical Society).

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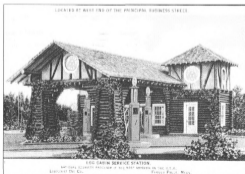
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Historic Photograph 3. Log cabin display in John Rurk's storefront window, Main Street, Stillwater, 1925 (Minnesota Historical Society).



Historic Photograph 4. Log Cabin Service Station, Fergus Falls, Minn., 1928 (Minnesota Historical Society).

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Historic Photograph 5, Tourist Log Cabin, Tourist Camp Grounds,
Minneapolis, Minn., 1927 (Minnesota Historical Society).