

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Sparre Barn

and/or common Sparre Barn

## 2. Location

street & number 20071 Nowthen Boulevard \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Anoka, Minn.  
Burns Township  vicinity of congressional district 8th

state Minnesota code 22 county Anoka code 003

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Robert L. Moen

street & number 20071 Nowthen Boulevard

city, town Elk River \_\_\_ vicinity of state Minnesota

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anoka County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Anoka state Minnesota

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Survey of Historic Resources

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1978, 1979 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society -- 240 Summit Avenue-J.J. Hill House

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Sparre Round Barn is scenically located on the western shore of Bass Lake, approximately ten miles north of the city of Anoka.

This imposing barn is constructed on a high red tile basement. The remainder of the barn is sheathed in a "ship-lap" siding. The interior support system is composed of post and beam construction. A wooden silo, with a polygonal roof, is attached to the west facade of the barn.

The two story interior space of the barn is composed of two circles on the first story. The outer circle contains space for cleaning the stanchions, which are located toward the center of this circle. The inner circle contains stanchions and feeding space for cattle. The second story of the barn was used for the storage of fodder and agricultural implements.

The barn, now used exclusively for storage, is in a very good state of preservation.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1917-1924 **Builder/Architect** Ernest B. Marsh

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Sparre Round Barn, under construction from 1917 to 1924, is one of two Anoka County examples of the "Great Experiment" in barn design. This barn is additionally significant as the best-preserved dairy barn in the county. Architecturally, the barn represents one of Ernest Marsh's best preserved barn designs. Marsh was a locally prominent architect who was noted for his Neo-Classic and Georgian Revival residential architectural designs. The massive size and the dramatic design qualities of this well-preserved round barn represent a significant architectural element on rural Anoka County's landscape.

The round barn was constructed in the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century and later. Various designs for round barns were widely circulated as an advance in "scientific agriculture" in leading farm journals of the day. The advantages for constructing round barns, according to two "historic barn experts," were that ". . . the round barn enclosed the least amount of wall space, providing an economical space in the circle and the advantage of a clean and easy sweep on the threshing floor and in the cattle stalls."<sup>1</sup>

From 1924 through the 1940s, this barn was used as a dairy barn. Anoka County agriculture was largely devoted to dairying from the late 1880s to the 1940s. The growth of suburban development throughout the county has resulted in the destruction of the majority of the county's dairy barns.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur, Eric and Witney, Dudley, The Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America, (Ontario, Canada: M.F. Fehely Arts Co., 1972) p. 247.

PLEASE NOTE: The manuscript for this nomination was prepared before the one paragraph limit for significance statements was stipulated.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

# 10. Geographical Data

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1

Quadrangle name Nowthen

Quadrangle scale 7.5

**UMT References**

A 

1	5	4	6	3	2	5	0	5	0	2	0	0	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing					

**Verbal boundary description and justification** T33N, R25W, Section 21, From the NW corner of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , T33N, R25W, Thence East 330 feet, thence South 330 feet, thence West 330 feet to East edge of County Highway 5, thence North along East edge of Highway 330 feet to POB.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynne VanBrocklin Spaeth

organization Minnesota Historical Society

date May 1979

street & number 240 Summit Avenue-Hill House

contact Dennis Gimmedstad  
telephone (612) 296-9545

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national     state     local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 11/1/79

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Carol O. Skell  
Keeper of the National Register

date 1-10-80

Attest:

Kristen O'Connell

date 12/21/79

Chief of Registration