

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89000157

Date Listed: 3/20/89

Church of the Sacred Heart (Catholic)  
Property Name

Jackson  
County

MN  
State

Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Beth Boland*

Signature of the Keeper

*3/20/89*

Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Item 3, Classification: Ownership is private.

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DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

0157

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

FEB 03 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). 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 listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Church of the Sacred Heart (Catholic)  
other names/site number Sacred Heart Church

2. Location

street & number 9th St. and 4th Ave.  not for publication N/A  
city, town Heron Lake  vicinity N/A  
state Minnesota code MN county Jackson code 063 zip code 56137

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.  
Nina M. Archabal 1/25/89  
Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal Date  
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer  
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.  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register. Beth Boland 3/28/89  
 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 of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious structure

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RELIGION/Religious structure

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Neo-Baroque

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foundation Concrete

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walls Concrete

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Brick

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roof Ceramic Tile

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other Stone

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Built in 1920-21, the Church of the Sacred Heart is a large religious edifice located near the corner of 9th St. and 4th Ave. in Heron Lake, a railroad town of 783 in southwestern Minnesota's Jackson County. The brick building has elements of Baroque and Neo-Classical styles, and is executed in a basilica plan. Adjacent to the church is a 1951 brick rectory which is considered a noncontributing element on the property.

Constructed with reinforced concrete and faced with textured reddish-brown brick and decorative gray stone Baroque detailing, the church has a symmetrical form dominated by twin square bell towers flanking a curvilinear parapet wall on the facade. The three-stage towers have open belfries featuring classical urns, keystones, and bas-relief supporting copper-covered octagonal caps with tall metal crosses. Paired ten-panel double doors are flanked by two pairs of Ionic columns with embellished capitals which support an ornate, curvilinear pediment with urns, medallions, and egg and dart molding. Below the pediment is a colorful tile mosaic of the Virgin Mary. Two ten-panel doors with semi-circular surrounds and stained glass transoms flank the primary entrance. Centered in the facade is an oval-shaped stained glass window set in an ornate stone surround, above which is a niche containing a statue of Christ.

The northwest and southeast elevations have three tall, round arch stained glass windows with stone keystones piercing the front half of the church, and two similar windows lighting the sanctuary. Below the stone beltcourse are small square windows. Projecting from the center of each wall is a short transept with a bowed wall, a large, round stained glass window above four small rectangular, stained glass windows, and below a row of oval stone panels and a bulls-eye. The curvilinear parapet wall is topped by a stone cross and two urns. The sidewall bays are divided by tall brick pilasters with simple stone capitals and bas-relief. Attached to the northeast corner is a two-story hipped roof extension; on its north wall has been added (ca.1965) a small brick garage with a flat roof. The apse has a conical roof and a corbeled brick chimney.

Despite being simplified during a 1965 redecoration, the interior of the Church of the Sacred Heart retains an ornate yet restrained Baroque-inspired design. Walls are decorated with classical pilasters and cornices heavily embellished with plaster detailing. The vaulted ceiling has rounded plaster ribs and is elaborately painted with various pastels featuring gilt detailing, angels, medallions, and floral patterns. Within the curved apse ceiling is a mural

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depicting images of Christ in Heaven, St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, an ancient Roman gate in Trier, Germany, the Church of the Sacred Heart, and a grain elevator in Heron Lake. Other decorations include a central crystal chandelier, hanging lamps, plaster relief Stations of the Cross, and a large classical altar.

Sacred Heart Church is in excellent condition and unaltered except for the diminutive garage and protective plexiglass panels over the stained glass windows.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1921-1938

Significant Dates

1921

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Parkinson, Albert and Dockendorff, Bernard,  
architects

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Considered within the Agricultural Development and Railroad Construction historic context, the Church of the Sacred Heart is significant in American history as an edifice whose relatively large size and elaborate interior appointments symbolize its religious, social, cultural, and artistic importance to the residents of Heron Lake. Sacred Heart Church derives architectural significance as an intact example of an ecclesiastical building inspired by the Baroque and Neo-Classical styles, unmatched in scale, design and furnishings in southwestern Minnesota.

Platted in 1872 by the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad, Heron Lake was largely settled by Austrian and German immigrants with strong ties to the Catholic faith. The community was served by area missionary priests until its first resident pastor was appointed in 1884. That year the wood frame Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius was built across the street from Sacred Heart Church's future site to replace the parish's 1880 building which had blown down in a windstorm during construction. The 1884 church was financed by parishioners, donations from churches in nearby towns, and a contribution from a missionary society in Vienna, Austria. Around the turn of the century Heron Lake became the "mother" church for missionary parishes in five nearby towns. In 1914 Father Mathias Jostock, one of several Austrian and German priests to serve the parish, arrived in Heron Lake. A native of Trier, Germany, Jostock provided leadership during the planning phase and construction of the new church.

Construction of Sacred Heart Church was a notable community event and illustrates the social, cultural, and religious importance of a parish church in a small town such as Heron Lake. The parish voted to erect a new church in October 1916 and hired the LaCrosse, Wisconsin architects Parkinson and Dockendorff to design a building inspired by magnificent churches in Germany and Austria. Construction began late in 1919 (following a delay due to World War I) and from the start was a joint undertaking by members of the parish who comprised a large percentage of the town's residents. The building site was excavated in September 1919 by parishioners who used 27 teams, plows, and scrapers. All businesses in Heron Lake were closed on 29 April 1920, when the

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cornerstone was laid during a colossal ceremony marked by speeches, a banquet, and music by the local band. In January 1921 300 residents attended a ceremony to christen the church bells. Sacred Heart Church was dedicated on 24 August 1921 at a gala mass officiated by the diocesan Bishop and 40 area priests.

The church cost approximately \$150,000 to build and was financed through local efforts. Many interior decorations were imported from Europe and most donated by individual members of the parish or church service organizations. In Catholic church tradition, the stained glass, statuary, and wall and ceiling paintings were selected to inspire faith and instruct the parish in the history and tenets of the church. Sacred Heart's importance to local residents as a religious and cultural symbol is exemplified by the mural in the apse ceiling which depicts Christ reigning over a kingdom comprised of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the Sacred Heart Church, an ancient Roman gate from Trier, Germany, and the Heron Lake grain elevator (indicating the importance of agriculture to the community).

Architecturally, Sacred Heart Church can be described as an interpretation of restrained Baroque styling combined with Neoclassicism. While the composition is formal and simple, specific features blend to pleasantly unify the decoration and architecture. On the exterior, ornamental stone - particularly on the towers and surrounding the entrance - and curvilinear parapets create an undulating facade which is repeated on the sidewalls. The rhythmic interior is highlighted by the vaulted ceiling with pronounced gilt and highly detailed ornamental painting in warm, pastel colors.

Sacred Heart Church was designed by the LaCrosse, Wisconsin architects Bernard Dockendorff, Sr. and Albert Parkinson. Born and raised in LaCrosse, Dockendorff studied architecture in ca.1897 at the Technicum in Darmstadt, Germany. He worked in Germany for two years before returning to LaCrosse in 1902. His European training undoubtedly proved useful in securing the Sacred Heart Church contract, since the parish specifically requested a design which resembled churches in the Old World. Parkinson was born in Spaulding, England and immigrated to Sparta, Wisconsin where he worked as an engineer and contractor. In 1906 he moved to LaCrosse and joined in a mutually beneficial partnership with Dockendorff which lasted until the two men died within four days of one another in September 1952.

Until 1952, the firm designed hundreds of primarily public buildings such as schools, civic structures, and churches, as well as a few residences, hospitals, and commercial buildings. Together they served clients in the Upper Midwestern states of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin, with concentrated work in central and western Wisconsin (there are no other known buildings designed by the firm in Minnesota). The work of the partners was complimentary and their designs generally echoed traditional styles by

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utilizing brick, concrete trim and detailing, and emphasizing impressive, ornate entrances as exemplified in the Sacred Heart Church. The Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan has identified Parkinson and Dockendorff among those firms working in Wisconsin that can be readily considered "masters" for purposes of National Register evaluation. These determinations were based on historical documentation, the quality of work, and the extent of influence.

Through its massive scale, the Church of the Sacred Heart stands as an impressive local example of early twentieth century, classically-inspired ecclesiastical architecture which incorporates abstracted Baroque elements. Its intact appearance and elaborate interior artwork attest to its significance in the community and to the generosity of its parishioners.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Centennial: Sacred Heart Church, Heron Lake, Minnesota, 1884-1984. n.a., n.p., 1984.  
Heron Lake News. 22 April 1920; 21 July 1921; 25 August 1921.  
Heron Lake, Minnesota, 1883-1983. n.a., n.p., 1983.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property \_\_\_\_\_ Less than one \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References

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4	8	5	1	4	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies Lots 6 through 12 of Block 12 of the Original Townsite.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lots that have historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Michael Koop/Historic Preservation Consultant  
organization N/A date 27 January 1988  
street & number 615 Jackson St. NE telephone 612-623-8356  
city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55413