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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

DIVISION OF
NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAMS
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 Nelimark, Erick and Kristina, Sauna
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Off Township Road 615 not for publication N/A
city, town Tower (Embarrass Township) vicinity
state Minnesota code MN county St. Louis code 137 zip code 55732

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> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Rural Finnish Log Buildings of St. Louis Co., MN
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.
Signature of certifying official Ian R. Stewart Date 1/25/90
Deputy 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. Entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet. 4/9/90
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____

fus Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Log

Metal

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Erick and Kristina Nelimark Sauna is located just north of the unincorporated town of Embarrass at the northeast corner of the intersection of Highways 21 and 615. It is the only log building on a farmstead consisting of seven buildings. The site is flat and open, with the other farm buildings scattered around the property.

Measuring 16'4" x 23'3", the Nelimark Sauna is larger than any other bath house in the area. It has plank-shaped, hewn log walls that are joined at the corners with double notch joints (ristinurkka, sahanurkka). Notch heads are finished at a consistent length along the facade, while those on the back (north) wall protrude at varying dimensions up to ten inches. The log walls are constructed in the north European technique, with each tier insulated by cheese cloth. In the gable ends, logs extend only up to the eaves, then corrugated metal covers the upper gable.

The south-facing central entry is flanked by 2/2 double hung sash windows. One 1/1 double hung window pierces each gable wall, while the north elevation is unbroken. Walls are supported by a concrete foundation, and the gable roof, which has an off-center brick chimney, is covered with rolled asphalt.

The interior is divided longitudinally into two distinct spaces, each of which is further subdivided into two rooms. Entry is gained into a 9'3" x 13'3" room that is used as a changing room; it has a well pump, chimney flue in the northeast corner, and beaded ceiling boards. A lateral partition made of 3"-wide boards separates the front from the rear room, the latter of which is 6'2" deep and was used to store wood. A door to the right of the front room leads into the sauna wash room, which is nearly six feet deep and has a long wood bench adjacent to the south wall. A concrete and wood wall provides access into the steam room. Inside the sauna room along the east wall is a raised wooden bench/platform, while the brick chimney flue is located on the opposite wall. Like all of the other rooms except the wood storage area, the exposed interior logs in the sauna are painted silver.

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)

Agriculture
Architecture
Ethnic Heritage: European

Period of Significance

ca.1930-1939

Significant Dates

ca.1930

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Nelimark, Erick, architect and builder

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

The Erick and Kristina Nelimark Sauna is historically significant under National Register Criterion A because it is associated with the efforts by Finnish immigrants to transform the cutover area of northeastern Minnesota into productive agricultural land during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is also architecturally significant under Criterion C as a good example of a well preserved building type that embodies the distinctive, traditional log construction techniques used by Finns in St. Louis County. The Nelimark Sauna represents the third associated property type (Saunas) and typifies how this kind of building was an integral feature of rural Finnish farmsteads in the county. Because it is closely associated with the evolution of the area's vernacular landscape, the Nelimark Sauna is also representative of the agrarian way of life that the Finns sought when the iron ore mining and lumber industries employed most residents (see associated historic contexts, The Iron Range, 1880s-1930s and Northern Minnesota Lumbering, 1870s-1930s). The Nelimark Sauna also represents the third historic context, Finnish Log Architecture, 1880s-1930s in its use of traditional materials, construction methods, and design.

The familiar smoke sauna (savusauna) as well as the smokeless variety illustrate how Finns transferred an important cultural tradition from their homeland to northern Minnesota's cutover region. Finnish settlers revered the sauna, and considered it as an essential component of every rural farm. If one resident did not have a sauna, neighbors freely shared theirs because of the significance attached to the event of "taking sauna." In addition to its primary role as a place for bathing, the sauna also served a variety of other purposes. According to a Finnish proverb, "If the bath house and brandy cannot help a man, death is near at hand" (Hoglund 1960, 99).

The Nelimark Sauna is unusual for its large dimensions but this was a function of the size of the family. Eleven children and the parents used the sauna (and possibly neighbors as well), thus it is understandable why each interior

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See the Historic Contexts Bibliography

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References

A 1 5 | 5 6 0 3 8 0 | 5 2 7 8 9 1 0
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____ | _____ | _____

B _____ | _____ | _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____ | _____ | _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is a rectangle parcel measuring 26'4" x 33'3", whose northwest corner is ten feet directly northwest of the northwest corner of the foundation of the sauna and whose southeast corner is ten feet directly southeast of the southeast corner of the sauna.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes just the sauna because it is the only log building on the property. The other wood frame and weatherboard buildings do not meet the registration requirements thus they were excluded from the boundary.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Nelimark, Erick and Kristina, Sauna, St. Louis County, MN

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room is so spacious in comparison to other area bath houses. It is also significant that while all of the other Nelimark farmstead buildings are made of balloon frame construction, the owner and builder of the sauna chose in the 1930s to build it in the folk form using traditional materials.