

## Copper Country Survey Phase II

**District Name:** Baraga District

**County:** Baraga      **Township(s):** Baraga

**Boundaries:** Bounded on the north by Bear Town and Cadeau roads (included); bounded on the west by Bellaire and Plains roads, excluded along with Pelto Road; bounded on the south by Wadaga Road (included); bounded on the east by Keweenaw Bay. Includes resources on both sides of the roads.

**Historic Use:** Domestic; Industry; Religion/Funerary; Agriculture; Commerce; Transportation

**Current Use:** Domestic; Industry; Commerce; Recreation and Culture

### RESOURCE COUNT

**Buildings:** 453   **Structures:** 5   **Objects:**      **Sites:** 18

### MATERIALS

**Foundation:** Concrete; Stone

**Roof:** Asphalt; Metal/Steel; Wood/Shingle

**Walls:** Vinyl; Wood/Fiberboard; Wood; Brick; Metal/Steel

**Other:** Wood; Brick; Metal/Steel

**Style:** Arts and Crafts Style; Gothic Revival; Queen Anne

**Description:** The Baraga district is located in northwestern Baraga County at the southwestern end of Keweenaw Bay. The district is within the L'Anse Indian Reservation of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community. The incorporated village of Baraga occupies the southeastern corner of the district. U.S. 41 follows the lakeshore, where the highway was relocated in the 1930s. A section of old U.S. 41 (Mission-Old 41 Road) angles inland from U.S. 41 north of Assinins and continues south to the village of Baraga, where it becomes Main Street. M-38 (Michigan Avenue in the village) extends westward from U.S. 41 in the village to the western district boundary. The former Duluth, South Shore, and Atlantic Railroad line follows an angular path somewhat inland from the lakeshore and U.S. 41. The tracks are extant and in use up to the northern village boundary; north of that the railroad grade remains as a snowmobile trail. Bear Town Road is the longest local road, extending from M-38 at the western village boundary to the northern boundary of the district. Bear Town Road is the only local road that crosses the Little Carp River, which flows from southwest to northeast into Keweenaw Bay. On the outskirts of the village and in the north of the district, a small number of local roads mostly follow section and half-section lines.

The land rises gently westward from the lakeshore. Stamp sands from the Mass mill to the north are visible in places along the shore. The roadsides are wooded along much of U.S. 41 and where new developments have been built in wooded areas. There is a mix of young hardwoods and conifers, including some pine plantations, and evidence in places of recent logging. Elsewhere the landscape is largely open, with brushy vegetation encroaching. The village of Baraga is mostly residential, with a few commercial, industrial, and religious buildings. There is a mixture of farm and non-farm residential on the village outskirts. The Assinins religious complex is on Mission-Old 41 Road about two miles north of the village. There are some recreational properties along the lakeshore on U.S. 41 and a small number of farms and farm sites on local roads. There is considerable recent (post-1970) commercial, industrial, and residential development along U.S. 41, in the northern part of the village, and on the village outskirts.

Historically, the northern, western, and southern boundaries of the village of Baraga formed a rectangle, with the irregular Keweenaw Bay shoreline on the east. Recent annexations have given the village an irregular outline. Within the village, U.S. 41, Railroad Street, and Superior Avenue are parallel to the shoreline. West of Superior Avenue, several small street grids are evident, but they have different orientations. With a few curvilinear streets on the outskirts, the

overall street pattern is irregular. The Baraga marina is located on a spit that once served the Nester lumber mill; old dock pilings are visible alongside the spit.

There are only a few remnants of what was once a dense business district on the northern part of S. Superior Avenue. Two false front commercial buildings with bracketed eaves are notable survivors. Otherwise there are a few altered frame commercial buildings and a one-story brick commercial building. There is a false front commercial building on Michigan Avenue (M-38) and a two-story side-gabled commercial building on U.S. 41. More specific commercial building types include two brick gas stations on S. Superior Avenue—one an early twentieth century canopy type—and two motels, one on U.S. 41 and the other on Michigan Avenue. A drive-in at the southern end of Superior Avenue was originally an A & W.

The Pettibone plant and other industrial buildings on Railroad Street and S. Superior Avenue are one-story buildings with metal siding; they retain some of their older metal windows. Pettibone also has a cylinder shop—a one-story concrete block building—on Main Street. There is a concrete block utility building and a brick water plant on U.S. 41. Also on U.S. 41, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) building is an unusual example of the modern style, a two-story front-gabled brick building with a two-story vestibule in front and mosaic spandrels between its metal casement windows. The National Guard Armory on S. Superior Avenue is a two-story brick building built in 1956.

Three churches in the village all show the influence of the Gothic Revival style. Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church on State Street and Lakeside Covenant Fellowship Church on Pennock Avenue are both frame buildings. St. Ann Catholic Church on Lyons Street is the most substantial: a brick church with corner tower, built in 1920.

Houses are by far the most common building type in the village. With the exception of a side-gabled double house on S. Superior Avenue, all appear to be single-family houses. The large majority are frame houses; exceptions include a Quonset house, a brick house, a few log houses, and some mobile homes. There are a wide variety of house types dating from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. These include one-, one-and-one-half, and two-story front-gabled, side-gabled, cross-gabled, L-plan, upright and wing, and foursquare houses. Many of the houses have front porches. There are several remodeled bungalows. Queen Anne style influence is evident in turned posts and spindles, decorative shingles, and stickwork. Canted columns of the Arts and Crafts style are more frequent; occasionally there are bracketed eaves or exposed rafter tails. Post-World War II houses are numerous, primarily on the northern and southern outskirts of the village. Most of these are ranch houses, but there are also some Cape Cods and other side-gabled houses, split levels, and one A-frame. A number of ranch houses have a distinctive brick and Jacobsville sandstone veneer. Garages are the most common outbuildings; there are also storage buildings and one privy.

Northeast of the village proper (now within village boundaries), Lighthouse Road leads to the Ojibwa Recreation Area with campground and other facilities; most appear to have been developed after 1970. At the end of the road, the Sand Point lighthouse (1878) is a brick tower with attached one-and-one-half story brick keeper's dwelling, partially obscured by a more recent enclosed porch. A brick privy is one of three outbuildings at the light station; the modern light is on a skeletal steel tower. The Baraga Village Cemetery is on U.S. 41 a short distance north of Lighthouse Road. Burials date from the early 1900s; it is still in use.

Continuing north on U.S. 41, resources are sparse—some lakeshore cottages, a metal-sided industrial building, and Carla's Motel (ca. 1950). At Assinins (NR listed), there are few remnants of the thriving mission that Father Frederick Baraga founded in 1843. The school (1860) is a one-story front-gabled building with clapboard siding. The orphanage and convent (1866, 1877) is a three-story rubblestone building; the west wing has collapsed and the building is rapidly becoming a ruin. There is a gambrel roof barn with stone basement near the orphanage. A short distance to the north, the Assinins cemetery was established in the 1860s. Some graves are marked by simple wooden crosses, others by stone markers or statuary.

The remainder of the district outside of the village is a mixture of former farms and non-farm residential. Approximately ten farm sites were counted that retain landscape features such as orchard remnants, fields, fencing, and windbreaks. Farm buildings and structures at these and other former farms (without landscape features) include barns with gable, gambrel or Gothic roofs; saunas; garages; poultry houses; a granary (aitta); a springhouse; and a privy. Farmhouses and non-farm houses are largely the same array of types found in the village. An exceptional Queen Anne-style house on

Bear Town Road has a front porch with columns, two-story front and side bays, a second story balconette, decorative brackets, and gingerbread trim.

**Condition:** Most buildings in the district are well maintained, and many yards and gardens are very well cared for. Some buildings are in fair condition. The Assinins orphanage/convent is becoming a ruin—the west wing has collapsed and the eastern (front) portion is on the verge. One other ruined building was counted.

**Integrity:** Most of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century buildings in the district have been greatly modified. Replacement siding and window replacements are the norm and many window openings have been changed. Additions are not as common. Post-World War II buildings are more intact than earlier buildings. The business district is a small remnant of what was there in the early twentieth century, and there are many vacant lots where houses once stood.

**Theme/Subtheme:** Ethnic Heritage/Native American; Industry/lumbering industry; Architecture; Maritime History; Agriculture

**Date Built:** 1860s-1960s

**Architect or Builder:**

**History:** Native inhabitants along Keweenaw Bay utilized the land for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Native peoples followed seasonal migration patterns, coming to the shore of Lake Superior during milder months. Sand Point served as a burial site for prehistoric peoples from ca. 500 B.C. to 1,000 A.D. French Jesuit missionaries and explorers first encountered what was known as the L'Anse, St. Theresa's Bay, or Kewawenon during the second half of the seventeenth century. Trappers, hunters, and traders followed: first French, then British, and finally the Americans. The American Fur Company had a trading post on Keweenaw Bay during the first decades of the nineteenth century. The first permanent Euro-American settlement on the western side of Keweenaw Bay, however, was the Catholic mission established by Bishop Frederic Baraga in 1843. Baraga built a church and twenty-four log homes for parishioners, naming it Assinins in honor of an Ojibwe chief and friend. By the early 1850s, the population of the mission had reached around 350 parishioners, including whites, Native Americans, and those of mixed blood.

By the end of the century, the mission at Assinins contained a new masonry church, a convent, asylum, orphanage, and boarding school operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph. The brothers of the mission operated a thirty-acre farm with stables, barn, and windmill. A post office was established in 1894. The population of the settlement grew to over 450 by 1906. In that year, the Sisters of St. Agnes took over operation of the school and orphanage, which they ran until the facilities closed in 1954.

The L'Anse Reservation of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, established by the Treaty of 1854, encompasses much of what is today the village of Baraga. Due to government and missionary assimilation programs, many members of the community moved away from the traditional pattern of seasonal migration and adopted farming. James Bendry's arrival in the winter of 1850 is generally seen as the beginning of the village of Baraga. Although Bendry constructed a cabin for his family, he traveled back and forth between L'Anse, Baraga, and Houghton. He opened a sawmill between L'Anse and Baraga in 1851 and another in 1864, when he also opened a brickyard and trading post in Baraga. By the middle of the 1860s, the village had around 160 residents.

A lumber boom beginning in the 1870s brought people to work in the lumber camps and mills. A lighthouse was constructed at Sand Point in 1878 to guide shipping traffic through the bay. By 1880, the population of the village had grown to around four hundred residents. Thomas Nestor situated the headquarters for his lumber company and logging operations in Baraga in 1881. The Nestor Brothers Lumber Company and the Baraga Lumber Company of Saginaw opened sawmills between Baraga and L'Anse in 1883. The village of Baraga was incorporated in 1891 and had a population of just over one thousand inhabitants consisting both of Native Americans and Euro-Americans by the early 1900s. The population is roughly the same today.

**References:** 1906 Farm and Business Directory of Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon and Baraga Counties (Houghton, Michigan: Superior Publishing Co., 1906); Baragaland Bicentennial 1776-1976 (Baraga, Michigan: The Lumberjacks); Baraga County Historical Museum, "A Photo History of Baraga County," <http://www.baragacountyhistoricalmuseum.com/photohistory/>; Baraga County Historical Pageant (Ishpeming,

Michigan: Globe Publishing, 1969); Roy L. Dodge, Michigan Ghost Towns: Upper Peninsula Volume III (Tawas City, Michigan: Glendon Publishing, 1973); History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (Chicago, Illinois: The Western Historical Company, 1883); Theodore J. Karamanski, Deep Woods Frontier: A History of Logging in Northern Michigan (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Mark Keller, The Chippewa Land of Keweenaw Bay (Baraga, Michigan: Keweenaw Bay Tribal Center, 1981); Land Atlas and Plat Book – Baraga County, Michigan, 9th Edition (Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Map Publishers, Inc., 1996); Walter Romig, Michigan Place Names (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1986); Alvah L. Sawyer, A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People, Vol. 1 (Chicago, Illinois: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911); Donna L. Stiffler, "Assinins," National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1972; The Planning and Support Group – Bureau of Indian Affairs, The Keweenaw Bay Indian Community: Its Resources and Development Potential (Billings, Montana: Department of the Interior, 1977).

**NR Status:** Assinins is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Side Track Bar on S. Superior Avenue may be eligible as the only late nineteenth or early twentieth century commercial building that survives and retains integrity. The DNR building may be eligible as an example of modern architecture.

**Comments:**

**Surveyor:** Jane Busch    **Survey started:** 6/27/2011    **Survey ended:** 6/29/2011

**Photos:**



Sand Point Lighthouse at end of Lighthouse Rd. in Baraga Village, looking NW. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Baraga District\Lighthouse Rd-Baraga Village (1-B)



Streetscape of houses on north side of Michigan Ave. in Baraga Village, looking NE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Baraga District\Michigan Ave-Baraga Village (1)



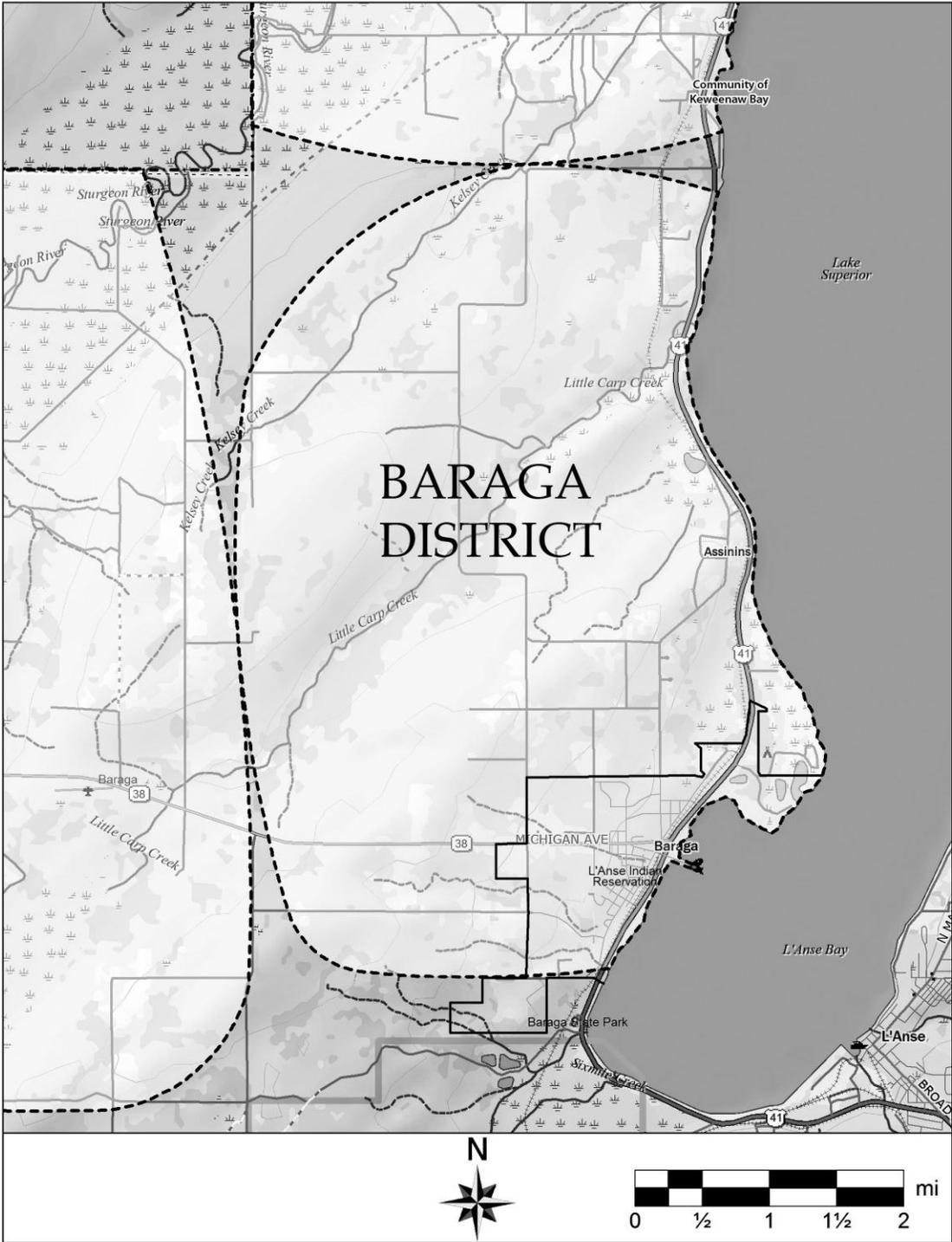
Gas station and commercial buildings on east side of S. Superior Ave. in Baraga Village, looking SE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Baraga District\S Superior Ave-Baraga Village (1)



DNR building on east side of U.S. 41 in Baraga Village, looking NW. Credit Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Baraga District\US 41-Baraga Village (2)



Orphanage on north side of Assinins Rd., looking SW. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Baraga District\Assinins Rd (2)



Approximate area of Baraga survey district. Credit: Ryan Holt

## Copper Country Survey Phase II

**District Name:** Keweenaw Bay District

**County:** Baraga      **Township(s):** Baraga

**Boundaries:** Bounded on the north and west by Houghton County line; bounded on the south by Bear Town Road (excluded); bounded on the east by Keweenaw Bay.

**Historic Use:** Industry; Agriculture; Recreation and Culture; Domestic

**Current Use:** Recreation and Culture; Agriculture; Domestic

### RESOURCE COUNT

**Buildings:** 296   **Structures:** 4   **Objects:**      **Sites:** 29

### MATERIALS

**Foundation:** Concrete; Stone

**Roof:** Asphalt; Metal/Steel; Wood/Shingle

**Walls:** Wood/Fiberboard; Vinyl; Wood; Asphalt; Wood/Shingle

**Other:** Brick; Metal/Steel; Concrete

**Style:** Arts and Crafts Style; Colonial Revival; Queen Anne

**Description:** The Keweenaw Bay district is located in northwestern Baraga County on the western shore of Keweenaw Bay. U.S. 41 follows the lakeshore, where the highway was relocated in the 1930s. Between U.S. 41 and the lakeshore, several short roads are lined with lakeshore cottages. The railroad grade from the Duluth, South Shore, and Atlantic Railroad line (DSS&A) remains as a snowmobile trail, following an angular path a short distance inland from U.S. 41. In the southeastern part of the district, a section of old U.S. 41 (Old U.S. 41 Road) forms a loop with U.S. 41. Sturgeon Road is the main east-west road in the southern part of the district. A few remnants of the community of Keweenaw Bay are located just south of Sturgeon Road in the vicinity of Old U.S. 41 Road and the DSS&A railroad grade. The Michigan mill site is on U.S. 41 a short distance north of the Sturgeon Road and U.S. 41 intersection. Arnheim Road is the main east-west road in the northern part of the district. There are no apparent remnants of the community of Arnheim, which was located on Arnheim Road. A few local roads extend from Sturgeon and Arnheim roads and inland from U.S. 41 to farms; most of these roads follow or parallel section lines.

The land rises gently westward from the lakeshore. The U.S. 41 roadside along the lakeshore is mostly wooded with a mix of hardwoods and conifers. Inland, the roadsides are mostly open, though vegetation is encroaching on former farms. Some of the smaller side roads are wooded. Kelsey Creek flows through the southeastern part of the district into Keweenaw Bay. The Sturgeon River flows through the western part of the district. Copper Country State Forest occupies the north-central portion of the district.

Resources are sparse on U.S. 41. The most prominent resource is the Michigan stamp mill boiler house (1906), a three-story, front-gabled industrial building with concrete block first story and metal siding over boards above. Just north of the boiler house, a crumbling mass of concrete is all that is left of the stamp mill itself. Across the highway, four saltbox houses remain from the ten company houses built ca. 1905. Originally built as double houses, the houses have all been remodeled as single houses, but their saltbox form is still evident. A short distance south of the houses, a mid-twentieth century roadside park has recently-constructed buildings and structures. Immediately south of the park is the site of the Mass stamp mill, which operated from 1901 to 1919. If there are features left at the mill site, they are not visible from the park or highway. A remodeled but still recognizable Queen Anne style house with Jacobsville sandstone basement and chimney is nearby, and there are reportedly stamp sands in places along the shore.

The remaining resources on U.S. 41 are mostly houses; no single type predominates. They include one-, one-and-one-half-, and two-story front-gabled houses; remodeled bungalows; a Tudor cottage; Cape Cod; ranch; raised ranch; and split level. Some of the houses were on farms; there are a few orchard remnants and on one property a Gothic-roof barn is extant. Other houses were built for lakeshore recreation. A few ranch houses have the distinctive stone veneer with brick edging seen along the lakeshore and in the Baraga district. Garages are the most common outbuildings.

Between U.S. 41 and the lakeshore, small one- and one-and-one-half-story gable-roof recreational cottages are the predominant house type. There are also some bungalows, trailers, ranch houses, and split levels. Garages and privies are common outbuildings. One of the houses emulates a Swiss chalet. Exposed rafter tails on a number of buildings show Arts and Crafts style influence. The wide variety of siding materials includes log, half-log, board, novelty, shingle, vinyl, asphalt, fiberboard, T-111, and stone veneer.

On Old U.S. 41 Road just south of Sturgeon Road, two buildings mark the historic community of Keweenaw Bay: Koski Welding, a one-story front-gabled frame building, stands next to a concrete block commercial garage with stepped gable front. Although it occupies a recently-constructed pole barn, the Keweenaw Bay Fire Hall to the south also indicates the location of the former community. A few front-gabled worker houses in the vicinity are a small remnant of what existed in the early twentieth century. Northwest of the community on Bennink (formerly Cemetery) Road, the Keweenaw Bay Cemetery contains headstones dating back at least to the 1920s; most of the names are Finnish. The cemetery is still in use.

Farms, a few still working, are located throughout the district; approximately two dozen farm sites were counted. Farm site features are various combinations of orchards, ponds, fences, fields, windbreaks, and ruined and standing buildings. Most of the farmhouses are front- or side-gabled with one, one-and-one-half, or two stories; there are also several L-plan and foursquare houses. It is likely that a number of farmhouses are constructed of logs, though all are now covered with siding. Front entry porches are more common than full-width porches. Shed-roof dormers, 3/1 windows, and exposed rafter tails are found on some houses. Post-World War II farmhouses include ranch houses, Cape Cods, trailers, and one Quonset hut. Barns have gable, gambrel, and Gothic roofs. Other farm outbuildings and structures include garages, saunas, poultry houses, and a springhouse. Log construction is visible on some of the barns and outbuildings. Just off Sturgeon Road, Hillside Acres farm is a standout—a working dairy farm with about ten buildings, including Gothic-roof barn, arranged around a courtyard according to Finnish tradition. Of special note is the National Register-listed Hanka Homestead in the west-central part of the district. Built by the Finnish Hanka family beginning in 1896, the homestead contains more than a dozen log buildings, structures, and landscape features including farmhouse, cattle barn, stable, chicken coop, milk house, root cellar, granary (aitta), sauna, and blacksmith shop.

There is a steel fire tower on Tower Road leading to the Hanka Homestead.

**Condition:** Lakeshore properties are very well maintained. Most farm buildings are in good condition, but there are a few—especially on abandoned farms—in poor or ruined condition.

**Integrity:** A large majority of houses built before World War II have replacement siding; original siding is more common on houses built after the war. Window replacements are common, and sometimes window openings have been changed. Most additions are in the rear and do not greatly alter the original form of houses. Barns and other farm outbuildings generally retain integrity. Only one original window remains on the Michigan mill boiler house, and the clerestory monitor roof has been removed, but the building's industrial character is still pronounced. Although there are a few buildings remaining from the historic community of Keweenaw Bay, it is no longer recognizable as a village. On the roads by the lakeshore, large new houses are mixed in with the surveyed houses.

**Theme/Subtheme:** Agriculture/dairy farming; Ethnic Heritage/Finnish; Industry/copper industry; Entertainment/Recreation; Architecture

**Date Built:** 1890s-1960s

**Architect or Builder:**

**History:** While Native Americans long occupied the shores of the Keweenaw Bay, French explorers and missionaries came to the area during the later years of the seventeenth century. Fur traders followed the missionaries and explorers

in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Loggers arrived during the nineteenth century. Some of the French Canadian loggers who came to the region remained and took up farming as the pine timber stands began to diminish.

Two men of French descent established the community of Laffreniereville (now known as Keweenaw Bay) in 1875. The small settlement, located on the wagon trail that connected Houghton and Hancock with Baraga and L'Anse, served as a way station for foot and wagon traffic. In 1877, a halfway house provided stagecoach passengers with food and lodging. By the early 1880s, a small school was built in Laffreniereville, and a post office opened in 1898 to serve the population of approximately two hundred people.

The postmaster changed the name of the community to Lafreniereville, and in 1901 a new postmaster changed the name to Keweenaw Bay. The Mass Mining Company purchased tracts of land along the lakeshore and constructed a stamp mill for its mine in Ontonagon County. The mill provided employment for the community from 1901 until its closure in 1919. Just to the north of the Mass mill, a mill for the Michigan Mining Company was under construction in 1906, but work was suspended in 1907 and the mill was never completed.

The community of Newtonville, located on the lakeshore roughly seven miles north of Baraga, grew around the Newton family's sawmill around 1880. By 1887, the population of the community was approximately 250, and preparations for sandstone quarrying were underway. The Keweenaw Redstone Company was incorporated in 1891. By 1897 the post office serving the community closed, and the population dwindled.

Four miles to the north of Newtonville, the settlement of Arnheim was named for the superintendent of the Superior Red Sandstone Company. At the turn of the century, roughly one hundred people who lived in and near Arnheim worked on their farms, in the sawmill, or at the Superior Red Sandstone Company or the Portage Entry Quarries Company on the lakeshore. The Portage Entry Red Stone Quarry was operating on the northern edge of Baraga County in 1887. In 1893, the company was consolidated with the Portage Entry Sandstone Company on the Houghton County side of the Portage Canal to form the Portage Entry Quarries Company. The Superior Red Sandstone Company opened in 1899. Arnheim was also a station on the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad route between Houghton and Baraga. A post office opened in 1900 and served the community until 1951.

Although many of the farms established during the mid-1870s belonged to those of French or Native American descent, Finnish immigrants dominated during the early twentieth century. In addition to farming, many of the immigrants worked at the stone quarries. When the quarries closed, men turned to hardwood logging to supplement their families' farming. The Hanka Homestead, located in the northwest corner of the district, is a restored Finnish homestead built by the Hanka family beginning in 1896.

**References:** 1906 Farm and Business Directory of Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon and Baraga Counties (Houghton, Michigan: Superior Publishing Co., 1906); Baragaland Bicentennial 1776-1976 (Baraga, Michigan: The Lumberjacks); Baraga County Historical Pageant (Ishpeming, Michigan: Globe Publishing, 1969); Nancy Besonen, "Shulstad seeks answer to Michigan Mill mystery," L'Anse Sentinel, undated clipping; Roy L. Dodge, Michigan Ghost Towns: Upper Peninsula Volume III (Tawas City, Michigan: Glendon Publishing, 1973); Kathryn Bishop Eckert, The Sandstone Architecture of the Lake Superior Region (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000); History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (Chicago, Illinois: The Western Historical Company, 1883); Land Atlas and Plat Book – Baraga County, Michigan, 9th Edition (Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Map Publishers, Inc., 1996); Gene Meier, 'Askel' Means Step (L'Anse: L'Anse Sentinel, 1983); Lawrence J. Molloy, A Guide to Michigan's Keweenaw Copper District: Photographs, Maps and Tours of the Keweenaw—Past and Present (Hubbell, MI: Great LakesGeoScience, 2008); Walter Romig, Michigan Place Names (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1986); Alvah L. Sawyer, A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People, Vol. 1 (Chicago, Illinois: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911); Trestles and Tracks—A History of Keweenaw Bay and Arnheim (L'Anse: L'Anse Sentinel, 1983).

**NR Status:** Listed in the National Register in 1984, the Hanka Homestead (Herman and Anna Hanka Farm) is nationally significant as a relatively intact and unaltered collection of Finnish buildings and landscape features located within one of the earliest and largest Finnish rural communities in the United States. There do not appear to be other farms that are individually eligible, but some might contribute to a rural historic district extending from the Tapiola district, which adjoins on the west; intensive level survey is recommended. The Michigan Mill boiler house may be eligible under Criterion A as an evocative remnant of the stamp mills on Keweenaw Bay.

**Comments:** The Michigan boiler house became the Michigan ballroom ca. 1939 and beginning in 1944 was used as a potato warehouse. It is currently occupied by a jewelry manufacturer.

Some houses in wooded areas are not visible from the road.

**Surveyor:** Jane Busch   **Survey started:** 6/30/2011   **Survey ended:** 6/30/2011

**Photos:**



Farmhouse and outbuildings on north side of Arnheim Rd., looking NW. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Keweenaw Bay District\Arnheim Rd (2)



Streetscape on east side of Old U.S. 41 Rd., looking SE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Keweenaw Bay District\Old US41 Rd (1)



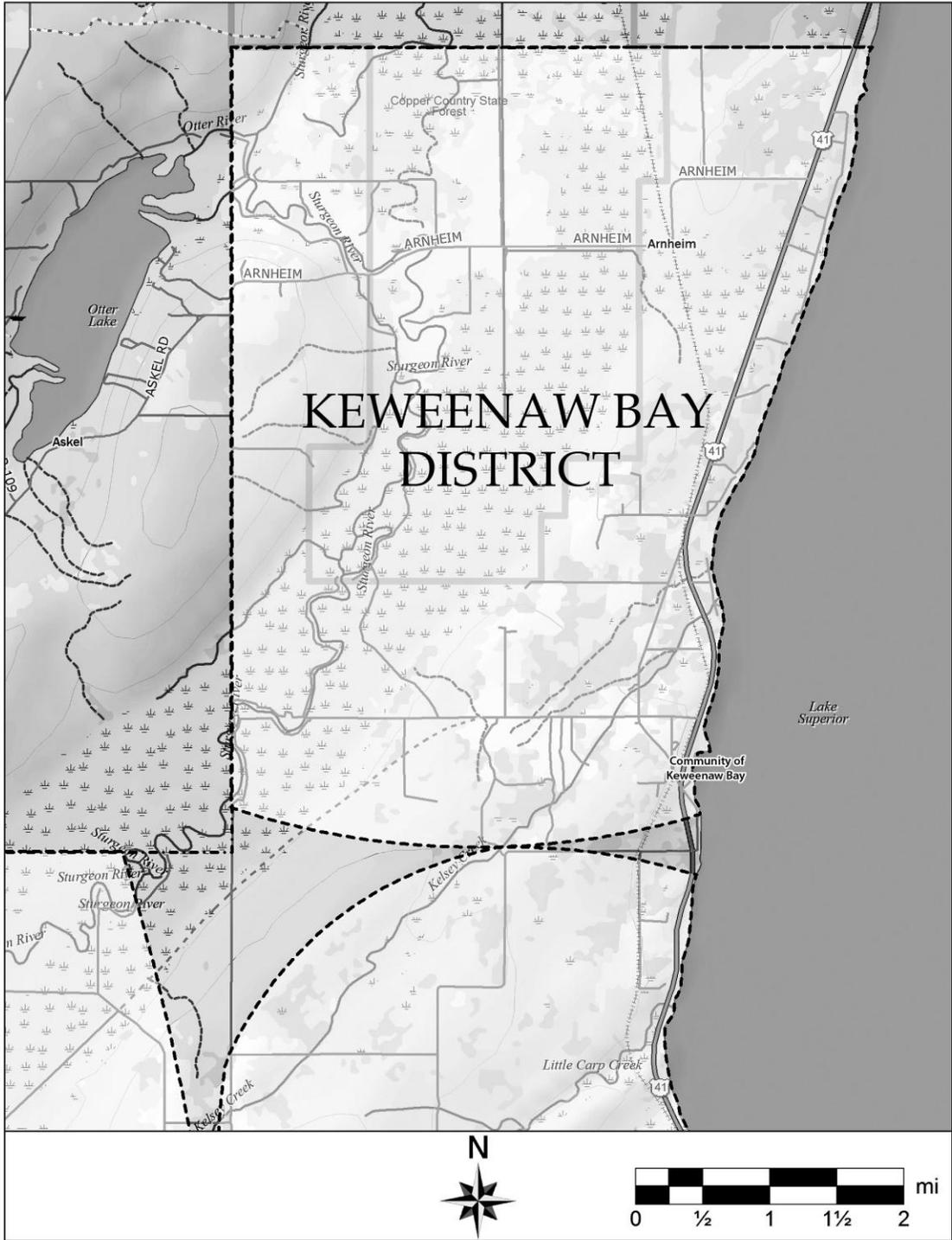
Lakeshore cottages on east side of Jurmu Rd., looking NE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Keweenaw Bay District\Jurmu Rd (1)



Michigan mill boiler house and ruin on east side of U.S. 41, looking NE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Keweenaw Bay District\US41 (1)



Michigan mill houses on west side of U.S. 41, looking SW. Credit: Jane Busch  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Keweenaw Bay District\US41 (3)



Approximate area of Keweenaw Bay survey district. Credit: Ryan Holt

## Copper Country Survey Phase II

**District Name:** Pelkie District

**County:** Baraga      **Township(s):** Baraga

**Boundaries:** Bounded on the north and west by the Baraga-Houghton County line; on the south by Krolik Road; on the east by Plains and Bellaire roads, extending east to include Pelto Road. Includes resources on both sides of roads.

**Historic Use:** Agriculture; Domestic; Commerce; Industry

**Current Use:** Agriculture; Domestic; Industry; Recreation and Culture

### RESOURCE COUNT

**Buildings:** 553    **Structures:** 2    **Objects:** 6    **Sites:** 178

### MATERIALS

**Foundation:** Stone; Concrete

**Roof:** Metal/Steel; Asphalt; Asbestos

**Walls:** Wood; Vinyl; Asphalt; Wood/Log; Stone/Jacobsville Sandstone

**Other:** Wood; Brick

**Style:** Arts and Crafts Style

**Description:** The Pelkie district forms a virtual square in the northwestern section of Baraga Township and Baraga County. The central area of the district is quite level, whereas portions of the western and southern sections are hilly and rolling. Some of the hills provide exceptional overviews of the district; one such view toward the southwest is offered from Larson Road, located in the northwestern area of the district. The forty-two-square-mile Pelkie district is further defined by five rivers and several creeks. The major river, the Sturgeon, meanders through the central and northeastern sections of the district with extensive wetlands along its banks. Pine Creek, the Silver River, and the West Branch of the Sturgeon join the Sturgeon River's main channel south of Pelkie village. Two historic bridges span the Sturgeon River, both constructed with federal funds: a concrete and steel bridge (1956) on M-38, and south of Pelkie village, a smaller structure built in 1950. Because the topography associated with Pine Creek is quite rugged, numerous recreational properties are located throughout its valley. Farther south, Gristmill Creek flows into the Sturgeon. A short section of the Otter River passes through the district's northwestern corner, while the Little Carp River flows through the southeastern corner.

Much of the original forest cover of the Pelkie district was removed by logging interests during the late nineteenth century. Today, however, a significant proportion of the district is reforested with mixed hardwoods, aspen, birch, and conifers. Many of the conifers have been planted close to farmsteads and buildings and line driveways where they serve as windbreaks; others exist in plantations, and a few Christmas tree farms are scattered throughout the district. Remnant apple orchards survive in many places, usually on higher ground. Overall, the second- and third-growth hardwoods and conifers now serve as resources for logging—the district's primary economic base—and for recreation. After the forest cover was removed, the better soils were utilized for agriculture, primarily dairy farming. Today, a patchwork pattern of fields characterizes farming in the district. Most of the cultivated land is utilized for raising hay (much of it shipped elsewhere), and for growing small grain crops such as oats. Some beef farms are located throughout the district, and a number of residents keep horses for recreation.

With the exception of M-38, the vast majority of roads in the district follow township and section lines. Most former and current farmsteads are located relatively close to these roadways. More than ten short, dead-end roads, which typically terminate at the edge of a river valley or wetland, usually serve one to three farmsteads or residences. Many former farm properties have been subdivided into smaller parcels. Traces of the former Mineral Range Railroad corridor are

barely visible today; however, a section of the rail bed that once connected the railroad stops of Froberg and Hamar Siding now accommodates Hamar Road. Other than a large concrete platform at Froberg, nothing remains of the two railway stops. Also vanished is the small nineteenth-century farming settlement of Carlson. Now occupying the area nearby is the Baraga landing strip, defined by a grass field and a small cement block building.

Since the 1890s the major service center for the district has been located at the unincorporated village of Pelkie. The small community assumed greater importance when the Mineral Range Railroad reached the hamlet in 1902. Pelkie also served as an important location for the cultural and commercial activities of the district's large Finnish population. Still standing in Pelkie are two Finnish Apostolic Lutheran churches. The Pelkie Apostolic Lutheran Church, built in 1918 of frame and board on a sandstone foundation, has a gable roof and enclosed entry; it has been subsequently converted into a residence and its former round windows replaced by smaller square inserts. The First Apostolic Lutheran Church, built in 1938, retains integrity and is still active. Constructed of frame and board and covered with lap siding, the church is placed upon a high sandstone foundation, utilizes a cross-gable form, includes its original round windows, and displays a storm porch over the entry door. A two-door privy and a shed are situated behind the church. Also in Pelkie are several Finnish cooperative buildings, all of them now vacant: a store with a feed department addition and an adjacent automobile service station and garage. Another building that formerly housed a garage, gas station and farm equipment dealer constructed of rusticated concrete blocks remains across the road. At least two private saunas remain behind houses, each of them connected to an adjoining shop and storage area. One is clapboard-sided and has a side-gabled roof with exposed rafter tails. Two large buildings sited back off Pelkie Road are probably associated with the former rail line, discontinued in 1948 and now abandoned. One is a former feed mill, and the other, shaped like a quonset hut, may have functioned as a storage building.

Also remaining in Pelkie are about two dozen single-family houses; many are one- or one-and-one-half-story and appear to be substantially altered with a variety of newer siding materials, including fiberboard and vinyl, small additions, and replacement windows. There are also a several newer ranch houses and a few one-and-one-half-story houses that appear to date from the 1930s or 1940s. Notable at the northern edge of the community are three similar, post-WWII residences—all small, plain, and in fair condition. Each is side-gabled with an entry gable and wide fiberboard siding; one has original six-over-six windows. Sited close to the road, several residential garages of various materials and sizes are also scattered throughout the settlement. The in-use Pelkie Elementary School (formerly Pelkie Agricultural School, 1932) is of brick construction, two stories, with a flat roof and concrete wall trim. In the entry wings that extend from the main block, classical doorways are surmounted with tall, round-arched windows with original tracery. Doors and the remaining windows are modern replacements in the original openings. To the north of Pelkie village, Baraga's only remaining one-room school remains in excellent condition with integrity intact. Now out of use and maintained by a local historical group, the wood-sided building is front-gabled, with original two-over-two windows, an entry porch, and metal roof with a bell cupola on the ridge.

Farms with historic buildings—including various combinations of barns, silos, granaries, sheds, privies and houses—remain the most numerous resource type throughout the district. Most farms retain one to six historic buildings and include landscape features such as orchards, pastures, windrows, wood fence posts and open fields. Some properties yet display evidence of an open courtyard pattern—buildings grouped around a central open area, a practice often followed by immigrants from western Finland. Also evident are a number of gable-roofed barns, some displaying a log lower story. A few of the oldest have two bays (one for cattle, the other for hay storage) connected by a central drive through. A few barns reveal stovewood walls, although this construction technique typically appears in poultry houses and storage sheds, of which several examples remain. Stovewood (or cordwood) refers to a type of wall construction that uses short logs, or wood blocks that are stacked lengthwise so that the ends face outward. Mortar is used to bond the wood units together. One excellent stovewood building, probably a poultry house, is located on Gristmill Road. Another wall construction method used widely in the district is the Nordic technique of stacking closely fitted, hewn logs and joining them at corners with dovetail notches.

The relatively large number of extant gambrel- and Gothic-roofed barns are indicative of the progressive practices that many farmers pursued during the early decades of the twentieth century. One fine example of a Gothic-roofed barn with a wing is located on Gristmill Road; although no longer in active use, the metal-roofed barn is built on a fieldstone foundation and includes an adjacent concrete stave silo. Like this example, few barns have original wood or asphalt shingle roofs intact; virtually all now have metal roofs. Another distinctive feature of the Pelkie district is the Finnish

aitta, an unheated storage building that typically was used as a granary, and occasionally, to accommodate off-season clothing; several still retain integrity. Typically squarish in plan, with a front-gabled roof, this wood-frame building consists of one full story plus a loft; the siding is usually wood shingles or boards. Also apparent within many original farmsteads are as many as fifty historic saunas, distinguished by their small size, gable-roofed form and brick chimneys. Some still display their origins as a one-room, log savusauna (smoke sauna), which later was modernized by adding a chimney and a dressing room. Saunas appear with a variety of siding materials—rolled asphalt, wood shingles, and even vinyl. Roofs are typically asphalt shingled or metal. Original fixed-sash, small square windows with divided lights often remain.

In particular, Hamar Road has at least three farms that are highly intact; the Johnson farm on Hamar Road is an outstanding example. One of the most outstanding farmstead complexes in Finnish America is located nearby on Kyro Road (also a Johnson farm); none of the eighteen buildings constructed from the early 1900s onward have been moved or razed. Elsewhere in the district, a farm on Larson Road reveals a well-crafted log building, a large barn, several outbuildings, and a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside

The vast majority of historic dwellings built in the district were originally associated with working farms. In many cases, they now stand as the only buildings in use on a non-operating farm, or the only buildings occupied and remaining on a farmstead where many other buildings have been razed, abandoned, or are in ruins. Some early house types remain: one- or one-and-a-half-story foursquares with pyramidal roofs and clapboard siding; one-and-a-half- or two-story front gabled; one-and-a-half story side-gabled; and one-and-a-half or two-story upright-and-wing. Most of these houses have been greatly altered. As-built and now, they show no clear references to any stylistic influences. A notable house type in the district, likely dating from the 1920s and 1930s, is a one-and-one-half-story, side-gabled bungalow, with a wide, enclosed front porch. This house type generally has a prominent shed-roofed dormer on the front; some examples of this type are gambrel-roofed. These houses yet show various Craftsman influences: three-over-one windows; wide, overhanging eaves; and exposed rafter tails, although most have been changed by siding replacement, metal roofs and replacement windows.

In many cases, especially on working farms, older houses have been replaced by mobile homes; one-story, vinyl-sided manufactured houses; or one-story wood-framed ranch type dwellings with vinyl siding and low-pitched, shingled roofs. Most appear to be built after 1970. These types also appear frequently on small, residential lots split off from farm parcels, particularly on the district's paved roads. In addition, some small-scale wood frame buildings used as hunting or fishing camps or for recreational purposes are scattered around the district near rivers and streams.

Additional notable buildings in the district include the dilapidated Baraga Grange Hall (Bellaire Road); and just outside of Pelkie on an elevated site, the still-active former Kyro Church (Lutheran), recently substantially altered by a front entrance addition. Now vinyl sided, it has retained the upper half of its prominent entry tower, steeple, and its double-sloped roof. Adjacent to the church is a baseball field with a backstop that continues to serve as a local recreational site. Other important recreational facilities in the district are the Baraga County Fair Grounds (next to the Pelkie Elementary School) and the Ottawa Sportsmen's Club (M-38 near Pelkie Road). Both sites have long been used for recreational purposes, but the lodge on the club property dates from 1981, and the large, gabled metal buildings on the fairgrounds also appear recently constructed. Another site is the Pelkie Cemetery (ca. 1910) located on Pelkie Road near M-38. The large, flat, treeless burial ground has rows of conifers planted around its perimeter. At the juncture of Quarry and Eiola Roads, pieces of antiquated quarrying machinery mark the entrance to a large, functioning, sand and gravel operation at the end of Quarry Road.

**Condition:** A majority of standing buildings appear in fair or good condition. In cases where buildings are unused or abandoned—and there are many—their condition is frequently poor, often collapsed or in ruins. Overall, houses remain in better condition than other building types. In the case of farmsteads with multiple buildings, the status of individual components comprising the site may range from excellent to ruined. Buildings with metal roofs (barns, generally) show higher integrity and remain in better condition. In Pelkie, houses appear generally in fair condition, garages and sheds less so. A few buildings are very well maintained, including the Apostolic Church (1938), and the Pelkie Elementary School. The majority of commercial and industrial buildings within Pelkie and in isolated areas around the district are in fair to poor condition. In addition, the district has several pockets of concentrated groupings of homes and outbuildings in very poor condition.

**Integrity:** Overall, integrity of setting, location and association with the district's historic themes and subthemes of agriculture and Finnish settlement is high. Farmsteads with a house, barn, and several outbuildings remain in large numbers spread across the landscape, and in many cases retain original landscape features, such as wood fences posts, windrows, and open fields. Many operating farmsteads, however, also include post-1960s buildings, often, a post-1960s wood frame or manufactured house. When original, houses on farmsteads frequently have been altered with additions, newer siding, and window replacement. Barns, in particular, show fewer apparent changes. Notably, the many extant saunas and granaries (aittas), as well as farmstead building arrangement patterns strongly associate the district with its Finnish ethnic heritage. Due to the presence of many hewn log buildings with dovetail corner notching, many of the district's buildings also possess integrity of workmanship.

At the center of the district, Pelkie has retained a range of buildings types that together yet convey its former identity as a "market town." Two churches, a former co-op store; former cheese factory, a school, an automobile service station/garage, houses and several former railroad-related buildings survive. Buildings have been altered with modern siding materials and additions, but their form, density and siting adjacent to the Pelkie Road remains intact.

**Theme/Subtheme:** Agriculture/dairy farming; Ethnic Heritage/Finnish; Architecture

**Date Built:** 1890s-1960s

**Architect or Builder:**

**History:** Although the current population of Pelkie is predominantly of Finnish descent, French Canadians founded the original settlement in 1885. King's Landing, established as an outpost for logging, was situated between three rivers key to the industry: the Sturgeon River, the Silver River, and the Otter River. The outpost grew in importance as logs cut during the winter were stockpiled in this central location and then floated to various mills with the spring break-up of ice on the rivers. King's Landing was named for French-Canadian logger Peter King.

The Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic Railroad Company (DSS&A) controlled the Mineral Range Railroad and associated properties by 1900, and began to market the cutover lands around King's Landing heavily to the Finnish immigrants in Houghton and Hancock. Many of the Finnish families who purchased lands from the DSS&A worked on the construction of the Mineral Range line from the Mass Mining Company mine in Ontonagon County to its mill in Keweenaw Bay. Finnish crews based at the section house in King's Landing worked both east and west to lay track and connect the mine and mill. In addition to copper ore, the Mineral Range Railroad carried hardwood logs, which were too heavy to float on the rivers, and produce from numerous area farms.

When a post office was established in 1903, the community was called Pelkie, after another settler. By 1910, pine logging had declined, and many French-Canadian families moved to Chassell and Baraga to work in the sawmills. In their place, newly arrived Finnish immigrants stepped in to purchase the farms. During the 1910s, Pelkie had its post office, a creamery, the Mineral Range Railroad depot, a school, three blacksmith shops, and a mixed population of French-Canadians and Finns. By the late 1910s, the majority of the French Canadians had moved on, leaving the community predominantly Finnish.

The Finnish farmers established a farmers' cooperative, much like other Finns across the Upper Peninsula. They purchased threshing equipment and other large farm machinery for collective use. The Pelkie creamery also functioned on a cooperative basis and incorporated both a dairy and a cheese factory. In the 1920s the Finnish community established an agricultural school. Initially the agricultural school was intended to replace the public school, but the two operated in conjunction with one another for many years. Farming remained the basis of the economy through the last half of the twentieth century. Dairy production was the main source of income for most farmers, although they also grew small crops of hay and potatoes for cash.

Other small communities in the district served primarily as siding locations for the railroads. Froberg, Gauthier, and Hamar were all siding locations along the Mineral Range line. As in Pelkie, Finnish immigrants came to Hamar and purchased existing farms starting around 1911. Swedish immigrants settled Carlson in 1875. Carlson grew as an agricultural community in order to support the booming community of Baraga five miles to the east.

**References:** Arnold R. Alanen & Suzanna E. Raker, "From Phoenix to Pelkie: Finnish Farm Buildings in the Copper Country." In *New Perspectives on Michigan's Copper Country*, A.K. Hoagland, E.C. Nordberg, & T.S. Reynolds, eds. (Hancock, MI: Quincy Mine Hoist Association, 2009; Baraga Area Schools, Baraga Area Schools All School Reunion, 1891-1991 (Baraga: The Schools, 1991); Baraga County 4-H Council, Tri-Annual Atlas & Plat Book, Baraga County, Michigan (Rockford, IL: Rockford Map Publishers, 1964); Baraga County Historical Society and Michigan Council for the Humanities, Baraga County Ethnic Pageant, August 14, 1982 (Baraga: The Society, 1982); Baragaland Bicentennial, 1776-1976 (Baraga, Michigan: The Lumberjacks); Baraga County Historical Pageant (Ishpeming, Michigan: Globe Publishing, 1969); Roy L. Dodge, *Michigan Ghost Towns: Upper Peninsula, Volume III* (Tawas City, Michigan: Glendon Publishing, 1973); *Farm and Business Directory of Houghton, Keweenaw, Ontonagon and Baraga Counties, 1906* (Houghton, Michigan: Superior Publishing Co., 1906); *History of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan* (Chicago, Illinois: The Western Historical Company, 1883); *Land Atlas and Plat Book – Baraga County, Michigan, 9th Edition* (Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Map Publishers, Inc., 1996); Michael Loukinen, "The Maintenance of Ethnic Culture in Finnish-American Rural Communities," *Finnish Americana*, Vol. 2, 1979; Sturgeon Valley Historical Society, Inc., *Pioneering in Pelkie* (Pelkie, MI: The Society, 1985). Walter Romig, *Michigan Place Names* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1986); Alvah L. Sawyer, *A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People*, Vol. 1 (Chicago, Illinois: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911); Sturgeon Valley Historical Society, Inc., *Pioneering in Pelkie* (Pelkie: The Society, 1985).

**NR Status:** The former Pelkie School (1909) appears eligible, as does the Pelkie Elementary School (1932). There may be a district including all or part of Pelkie village; intensive level survey needed. The First Apostolic Lutheran Church (1938) and the Pelkie Cemetery (ca. 1910) may be eligible. Several farmsteads on Hamar Road may qualify individually or as a district. Other farmsteads and/or individual farm buildings may be eligible, as determined by contextual research and an intensive level survey. The Johnson farmstead at 15704 Kyro Road appears to qualify individually. A stovewood building (probably a poultry house) at 16772 Gristmill Road appears eligible, as may other stovewood and hewn log buildings—intensive level survey needed. Certain sauna and granary buildings that show exceptional qualities of design or building technique survey may also qualify individually, to be identified through contextual research and intensive level survey.

**Comments:** Newer, large-parcel recreational properties, often along waterways, are frequently situated at the end of long driveways, not visible from the road. Farmsteads taken over as residences are also often shielded from view by woody vegetation that has grown up in formerly open fields. In a few, post-1970 houses, flat beach stones of Jacobsville sandstone gathered from Keweenaw Bay appear on facades and chimneys, a design feature quite common closer to Baraga. This form of ornamentation also appears to have been applied to several older remodeled homes.

**Surveyor:** Lynn Bjorkman; Arnold Alanen

**Survey started:** 5/9/2011

**Survey ended:** 5/10/2011

**Photos:**



First Apostolic Lutheran Church on east side of Pelkie Rd. in Pelkie, looking NE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Pelkie District\Pelkie Rd-Pelkie Village (3)



Former co-op store and automobile service station on east side of Pelkie Rd. in Pelkie, looking E. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Pelkie District\Pelkie Rd-Pelkie Village (4)



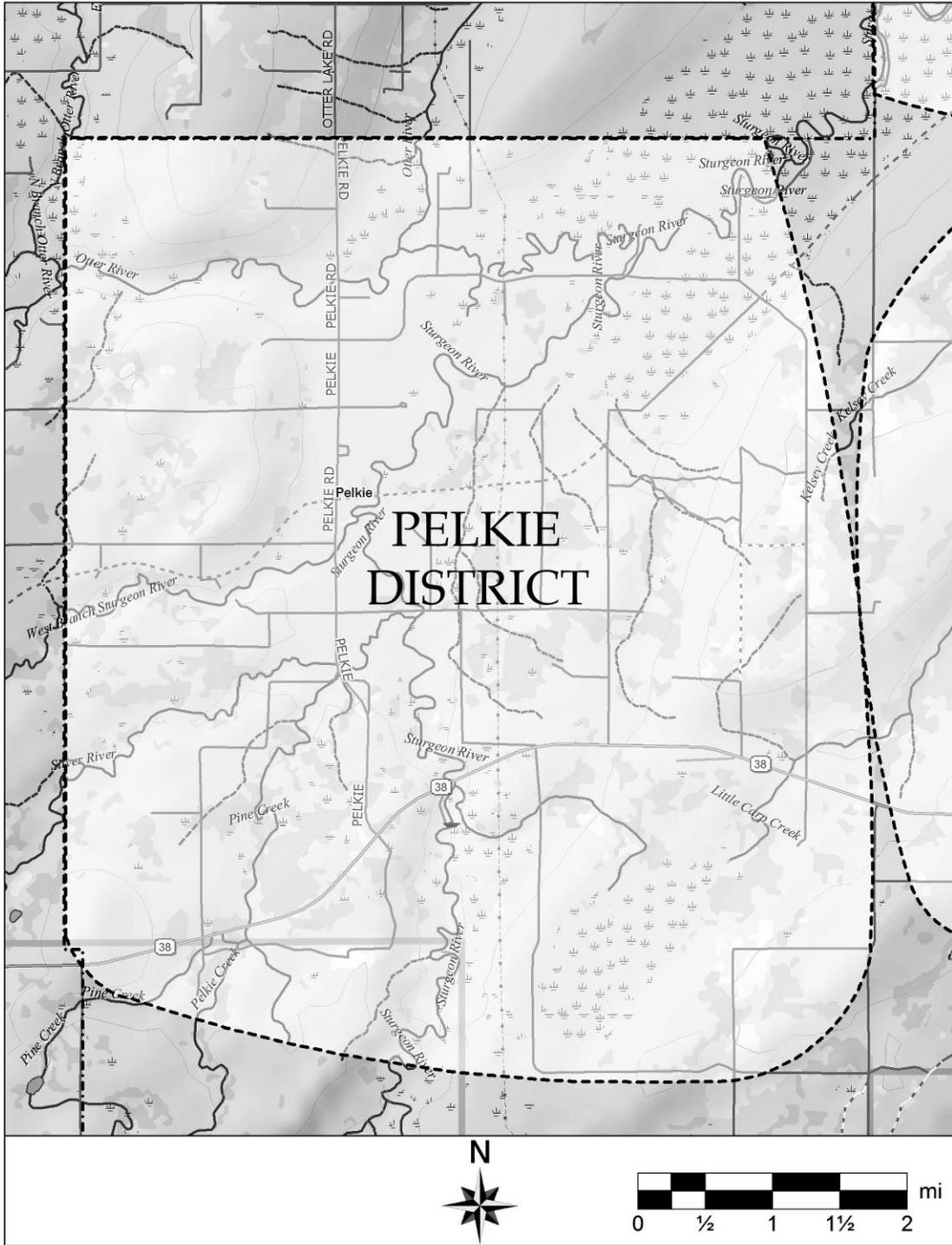
Pelkie elementary school on east side of Pelkie Rd. in Pelkie, looking NE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Pelkie District\Pelkie Rd-Pelkie Village (5-A)



Stovewood building on east side of Gristmill Rd., looking SE. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Pelkie District\Gristmill Rd (2)



Dairy farm on west side of Hamar Rd., looking SW. Credit: Ryan Holt  
Copper Country Survey Phase II\Baraga County\Pictures\Pelkie District\Hamar Rd (2)



Approximate area of Pelkie survey district. Credit: Ryan Holt