

PHO 689092

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 1 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 18 1978

**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

Big Horn Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

Big Horn Hotel

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Arminto

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Wyoming

CODE

56

COUNTY

Natrona

CODE

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: U.S. Post Office

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Donald L. & Kathie A. Baker

STREET & NUMBER

Big Horn Hotel

CITY, TOWN

Arminto

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wyoming 82630

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Natrona County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Casper

STATE

Wyoming 82601

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wyoming Recreation Commission: Survey of Historic Sites, Markers and Monuments.

DATE

1967 (revised 1973)

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

604 East 25th Street

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne,

STATE

Wyoming 82002

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>Ca. 1913</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Big Horn Hotel is located in Arminto, Wyoming, a small town (Pop. 18) on the eastern fringe of the Wind River Basin of central Wyoming. North of the hotel is a blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse and several residences, and further north is a sage and grass prairie stretching 15 miles to the foot of the Big Horn Mountains. South of the hotel is the right-of-way of the Burlington Northern Railroad, a residence, and prairie stretching for 25 miles to the Rattlesnake Range. East of the hotel is more prairie rimmed on the east by the Casper Arch which is also the east rim of the Wind River Basin, and west of the hotel is the Waltman-Arminto road, a residence, a large woolgrowers' warehouse, and still more prairie stretching west for 100 miles to the east slope of the Wind River Range.

Situated approximately 30' east of the Waltman-Arminto county road, and approximately 400' north of the Burlington tracks, the hotel is a rectangular, two-story frame building facing south. The dimensions of the hotel proper are 30' x 68', but attached to its north elevation is a one-story addition measuring 16' x 30'. The building sits upon a native stone foundation, and is capped by a hipped roof originally covered with wooden shingles, over which has been added composition shingles. The roof is penetrated by three brick chimneys. A distinguishing characteristic of the hotel is a porch capped by a moderately pitched roof, and which is attached to the main facade and continues 23' along the east facade. Most of the hotel's exterior is covered with asphalt siding designed to resemble brick, although its owners are in the process of removing the siding to reveal the original, cedar, clapboard siding which is in very good condition.

The main entrance to the hotel is on the south facade, although the west elevation has four entrances. Three of the latter, one of which is unused, are on the main level. One entrance on the main level leads into the north addition and another leads into the hotel bar. On the second floor is a single door entrance which is not used because it lacks a landing and stairway. The east facade contains one door which opens to a post office. The hotel contains a total of seventeen, rectangular, double-hung windows on the upper level, and seven of the same type on the main level. The south face contains two, large plate windows flanking the front door, above each of which is a double lite, transom window. The east face windows originally opening to the bar on the main level have been covered with asphalt siding.

At the time of construction the hotel offered sleeping rooms and meals and contained a lobby, parlor, dining room and kitchen. Immediately after it was moved to Arminto, however, an addition measuring 21' x 32' was added to the west side of the building and furnished with card tables, pool tables, and a bar. According to local sources, the cherrywood bar and backbar were shipped into Wyoming in the late 1860's and used in a tent town along newly-constructed Union Pacific Railroad tracks. In 1948 the hotel experienced major remodeling. The west addition was removed and the bar, containing a 1903 brass cash register made for Marquis and Co. by the National Cash Register Company, was moved into place along the east wall of the dining room. The foundation of the old bar room remained in place until 1977, when it was demolished because of its instability.

8 SIGNIFICANCE



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 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

Constructed 1906; Moved 1913; Remodeled 1948.

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Big Horn Hotel has been the center of two communities. It was built by J. L. Marquis in the town of Wolton, Wyoming in 1906 when the Chicago & North Western Railroad built a line through that town. When the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad (Burlington Northern) built a line through Arminto in 1913, the hotel was moved to Arminto.

Wolton was founded in the early 1890's when a man named Jack Clark established a stage station on a route between central Wyoming and southern Montana. Wolton at that time was called Poison Creek Station. When the railroad arrived, Wolton was already a busy community, having one of the largest, machine, sheep-shearing operations in the country. Upon the arrival of the railroad it became a shipping point for a large area east of the Big Horn Basin, and a place where ranchers picked up supplies. A stage took mail from Wolton north through the Red Wall country to Bucknum, where it picked up mail from the Buffalo stage, and eventually took it to Kaycee. One place where horses were changed was at the historic Irish Ranch, now known as the Buffalo Creek Ranch, located about twenty miles northeast of Arminto. The equipment used by the stage company belonged to the hotel's livery stable. Mr. Marquis also contracted to use his livery equipment in the process of supplying water for a newly-emerging oil industry.

When the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy announced a plan to run a line from Casper to meet tracks extending south through the Big Horn Basin from Billings, Montana, a depot and several sections houses were put up at a point seven miles northeast of Wolton. Mr. Marquis made the decision to move his business, including hotel, bar and livery stable, to the new location. The following excerpt describing the transfer of the hotel is taken from a taped interview with Mr. John McClellan of Shoshoni, Wyoming, a man who helped in the work.

"Two men from Douglas had contracted to move it and they cut it in two in the middle. And they came up, and well, it was the first tractor I ever saw in my life. They had a tractor, a big, high-wheeled outfit and two housemoving, four-wheeled dollies, they called them—bib tongues just like a wagon—and were going to pull it with that tractor. Well, it wouldn't do it. So they got a block and tackle, a three-lined block and tackle, and set a dead man (pole) and pulled it with that tractor.

And little me, I had the job of stretching the block and tackle back out with a team of horses after they'd pulled it up. They moved one half over, then they took the outfit back and moved the other half and put it together

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum: Item 9

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Via phone call 12-15-78 KJP

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Arminto, Wyo.

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,3 31,6 5,8,0 4,7 8,2 8,8,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point of the Southwest corner of the foundation of the Big Horn Hotel*, proceeding directly West for 32 feet, to the POB. Thence due South, 125 feet. Thence due East 170 feet, thence due North 200 feet, again East 180 feet, thence North 100 feet, return due West 350 feet, thence due South 175 feet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kathie A. Baker, Owner; Mark Junge, Historian; Walter Sedovic, Jr., Historic Architect

ORGANIZATION

Big Horn Hotel and Wyoming Recreation Commission

DATE

June, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Big Horn Hotel 604 East 25th Street

TELEPHONE

(307) 237-7860 BHH
(307) 777-7695 WRC

CITY OR TOWN

Arminto Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Jan L. Wilson

TITLE

Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

October 27, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

for Charles Atkinson
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12-18-78

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Brumbaugh 12-15-78



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CONTINUATION SHEET Big Horn Hotel ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The main level of the hotel today contains a lobby, post office, dining room, kitchen, bar, private bedroom and bathroom. The north addition contains a pantry and private bedroom. Rooms in the hotel proper have twelve-foot-high ceilings and both walls and ceilings are plastered. Floors are softwood and hardwood, the latter containing maple and oak planks. Some period furnishings, such as a claw-footed tub in the bathroom, and pot-bellied stoves—one each in the kitchen and hotel lobby—can be found in the rooms on the main floor. Most of the woodwork in the hotel including the stairway, balustrade and newel posts, is of varnished softwood.

The second floor contains thirteen hotel rooms, numbered one through twelve and fourteen, and two, small storage rooms, one of which contains the west doorway. All rooms enter off a T-shaped hallway, and have plaster walls and nine-foot, pitched ceilings also covered with plaster. Sleeping rooms contain period furniture of different styles, including beds made of brass and iron. In the ceilings of the northwest hallway is an opening to the attic. The basement of the hotel is partially excavated and has a dirt floor. Foundation walls are several feet thick and made of native stone, and first floor beams are supported by brick piers and rough-hewn, pine logs. The basement is used for storage, but also contains two floor heaters, a water heater, and a pump used to draw domestic water from a cistern located north of the hotel. All domestic water must be hauled into Arminto, since the town has no well deep enough to supply fresh water.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Big Horn Hotel ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

there on the foundation. We moved it all in one summer. We were stuck half the time, but then there never was any stuck-delay that we couldn't figure out to get out of in a day or two."

That same year most of Wolton's houses, and all of its major businesses, were moved to the new town of Arminto. Transportation and communication functions that took place at Wolton were also transferred—including the post office, the stage line to Kaycee, the railhead—as Arminto eventually became a major shipping point along the Burlington. A woman who moved with the town and became Arminto's first school-teacher was Minnie Mitchell. She later became the first woman to serve as Wyoming State Treasurer (1952-1954; 1966-1971) and the first woman to serve as Wyoming State Auditor (1954-1966). Railroad officials named the new town after a local character named Manuel Armenta whom they had met at the Big Horn Hotel and who owned the nearby Jack Pot Ranch. Armenta, whose name was misspelled when affixed to the town, was suspected by locals of having a "long rope." That is, it was believed he rounded up young animals and put his own brand on them. It's also said he had a steer that had fourteen calves in one year.

The Big Horn Hotel served as the center of Arminto's social, economic and political activities. Sheep and cattle ranchers who trailed their herds into Arminto shipped them from that point, then retired to the hotel for a celebration. Those who came to Arminto with a four or six-horse team picked up their supplies at the Wolton Commercial Company, located across the road from the hotel until the former burned down in 1949, and then stayed at the hotel for a few days. There, according to John McClellan, they proceeded to "get happy." Shipping activities remained brisk until the 1960's, and wool from this area is still stored in, and shipped from, a large wool warehouse located northwest of the hotel. Ranchers and wool buyers still settle up business accounts over the historic bar in the hotel.

When the town was incorporated in 1915 the first meeting of the town council on March 23 of that year was held in the parlors of the hotel. Joe Marquis, who later became Natrona County Sheriff, was appointed town marshall. That night the town celebrated with a big dance at the schoolhouse. At midnight, according to historian A. J. Mokler, "a sumptuous banquet was served at the Big Horn Hotel by Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Marquis." In 1964 the post office was moved to the hotel, where it remains today. The hotel is also the permanent polling place for all elections in the district.

The wealth of history associated with the Big Horn Hotel entitles it to the recognition and protection of the National Register of Historic Places. Massive energy explorations efforts in the area now and in the near future threaten to damage, and possibly overwhelm, the structure. The present owners, who purchased the hotel in May, 1977 and have made it their home, are interested in its history and are anxious to begin work toward its preservation.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Big Horn Hotel ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

ADDENDUM: ITEM 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY.

BOOKS:

- Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.
- Mokler, A. J. History of Natrona County. Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 1923.
- Urbanek, Mae. Wyoming Place Names. Boulder, Colorado: Johnson Publishing Co., 1974.

JOURNALS, PERIODICALS:

- Chatterton, Fenimore. "History of the Inception of Riverton," etc., Annals of Wyoming, XXV, 1 (January, 1953), 83-89.
- Condit, Thelma Gatchell. "Hole-in-the-Wall," Annals of Wyoming, XXXI, 2 (October, 1959), 195-212.
- King, Colonel Norman D. "Old Wyoming Postoffices," Annals of Wyoming, XXIX, 2 (October, 1957), 157-159.

NEWSPAPERS:

- "Arminto is Now an Incorporated Town," The Casper (Wyoming) Daily Press, (March 26, 1915), 1.
- "Big Horn Bought," Casper Star-Tribune, (May 22, 1977), 30.
- "Former Rancher of Fremont County Dies in Chicago Hospital," Wyoming State Journal, (March 19, 1930), 1.
- Hendry, Mary Helen. "'Oasis' Vision Soured at Hiland," no newspaper or date indicated for article; available in Vertical Files, Wyoming Recreation Commission, Cheyenne, Wyoming.
- "Who Dares Call Armenta a Horse Thief?," Casper Star-Tribune, (September 25, 1966), no page indicated.
- Pyle, Wyoma Henry. "From a Sheepwagon, to a Tent, to a House," Casper Star-Tribune, (March 31, 1974), 20D.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Big Horn Hotel ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

ADDENDUM: ITEM 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY.

INTERVIEWS:

John McClellan by Kathie Baker. 21, May, 1978.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Book 2, Office of the Natrona County Commissioners, Casper, Wyoming, page 152.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Big Horn Hotel ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

to the POB. Western boundary parallels County road, which was the old Yellowstone Highway.

*foundation of main building, not porch
POB--Point of Beginning.

ADDENDUM: VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The following metes and bounds description encloses property which includes the Big Horn Hotel, landscaping around the hotel and, in the northeast leg of the property, the site of the Arminto Jail: beginning at a point at the southwest corner of the foundation of the Big Horn Hotel*, proceeding directly west for 32 feet to the point of beginning, thence due south 125 feet, thence due east 170 feet, thence due north 200 feet, again east 180 feet, thence north 100 feet, return due west 350 feet, thence due south 175 feet to the point of beginning.

*foundation of building proper, not porch.

*Porch included in boundary - via phone call to Walter Sedovic
RTP 12-15-78*