

Historic Preservation Research Office

Structure/Site Information Form

Street Address: 1150 North 100 East
Pleasant Grove, Utah County

UTM: 12 437330 4469570
Timpanogos Cave Quad/1:2400
T. 5S R. 2E S. 20

Name of Structure: Larsen, Neils Peter, House

Present Owner: Joseph Wendell Larsen

Owner Address: 1146 North 100 East, Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062

Year Built (Tax Record):
Legal Description

Effective Age:
Kind of Building:

Tax #: D-411-4

This building is located on a large parcel of farm property in the NE⁴ of the NE⁴ of SLC.2 T5S R2E, Salt Lake Base & Meridian. The portion of that property on which this building sits is described as follows: commencing at a point approximately 200 feet N of the intersection of 1100 North and 100 East in Pleasant Grove, thence N 50 feet, E 75 feet, S 50 feet, W 75 feet to beginning. Less than one acre.

Original Owner: Neils Peter Larsen

Construction Date: c. 1870 Demolition Date:

Original Use: Residence

Present Use: Storage

Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Significant | <input type="checkbox"/> Not of the | <input type="checkbox"/> National Landmark | <input type="checkbox"/> District |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor Alterations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contributory | Historic Period | <input type="checkbox"/> National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Resour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Alterations | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Contributory | | <input type="checkbox"/> State Register | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic |

Photography: Date of Slides: 1986 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1986 Photo No.:

Views: Front Side Rear Other

Views: Front Side Rear Other

Research Sources:

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abstract of Title | <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> U of U Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plat Records/ Map | <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utah State Historical Society | <input type="checkbox"/> BYU Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Card & Photo | <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Encyclopedias | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> USU Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obituary Index | <input type="checkbox"/> LDS Church Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> SLC Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Permit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County & City Histories | <input type="checkbox"/> LDS Genealogical Society | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

- Beehive History, "Early Life in Pleasant Grove," Ruth H. Henrie, 11:16.
 Personal Interview, Joseph Wendell Larsen, 5 May 1986.
 Personal Interview, Susan Jarret, 6 May 1986.
 Manila Ward Newspaper, "Pioneer Home of Neils Peter Larsen," Effie Adams, November 1980, pp. 1, 2, Pleasant Grove Historic Preservation Files.
 Larsen Family Genalogical Records, Susan Jarret, 838 E. 500 N., American Fork, Utah.

Street Address:

Site No:

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ARCHITECTURE

Architect/Builder: NA/Neils Peter Larsen

Building Materials: Soft-rock

Building Type/Style: hall-parlor/vemacular

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

Built c. 1870, the Neils Peter Larsen House is a one-story hall-parlor house with a gable roof and soft-rock exterior walls. The only alteration of note is the insertion of a garage door into the rear wall in 1917 when the house was converted into a garage. That change does not significantly affect the integrity of the house because it is visible only from the back and it was made almost 70 years ago.

The Larsen House has a three-bay symmetrical facade consisting of a central door flanked by two windows. The doorway has been filled in and the windows have been covered with plywood, but the openings are still clearly visible. There is a small frame lean-to attached to the south half of the rear. It was probably built during the early twentieth century. There is a chimney at each gable end. The interior has not been changed from its original two-room arrangement, and much of the original woodwork remains. The interior adobe wall that divides the two rooms suffered severe water damage several years ago when the roof leaked.

There are no other outbuildings on this property, though there are some nearby. They are associated with the adjacent 1897 brick house that replaced this home as the family residence. Number of contributing buildings: 1

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HISTORY

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: c. 1870

Built c. 1870, the Neils Peter Larsen House is one of the 13 buildings included in the Pleasant Grove Soft-rock Buildings Thematic Resource nomination. Soft-rock buildings are significant because they help document the distinctive regional diversity found in nineteenth-century building stones in Utah. They also represent a distinct phase of the building construction industry in the Pleasant Grove area. Mormon community building in the Great Basin West rested upon the dual principles of order and permanence, and the grid-iron town plan and the use of stone as an early building material have become important symbols of Mormon settlement values. A great variety of local stones were used throughout the state, and the soft and easily worked tufa stone, popular in Pleasant Grove between about 1865 to 1900, remains one of the most distinctive. About 130 soft-rock buildings were known to have once stood in Pleasant Grove, yet there are only 13 well preserved examples today. Most of the earlier buildings in the community, constructed during the 1850s and '60s, were made of adobe, which was easily made and worked. As fired brick became more available and fashionable during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it replaced soft-rock as the dominant local building material. The remaining soft-rock buildings are important examples of a local architectural tradition and contribute to an understanding of the regional diversity of Utah's early architectural history.

In May 1862, Neils Peter Larsen homesteaded a quarter section in what was known as the north fields of Pleasant Grove. The first home on this ground was a dugout, a submerged room dug into the earth and covered with a roof of mud and willows. This provided living quarters for one of his polygamous families until this soft-rock home was built c. 1870 on the corner of the farm at 1150 North 100 East. One wife and family occupied this home while the

Neils Peter Larsen House
History continued:

other two wives and one family continued to reside in the Larsen home one mile south at 181 E. Center Street in Pleasant Grove. During the 1880's the nations's attention was focused on polygamous Mormons. The U.S. Government sent federal officers to the Utah Territory to arrest and prosecute the Mormons practicing polygamy. Neils Peter Larsen, having three wives, was one of the sought-after men. In order to escape arrest, he hid in the attic of the small soft-rock house while the marshalls were in the vicinity, which was quite often.

A desire for a financially independent territory brought another use for the small attic of this home. To help make Utah independent of outside industry, a domestic silk industry was begun. The Larsens were one of the families that became involved. They converted the attic of the house into a home for more than a thousand silk worm houses in cases and cared for by family members. A grove of mulberry trees was planted to feed the silk worms. Being on the outlying northern area of Pleasant Grove, the house served as a neighborhood school for the Larsen children and the children of several other families.¹ Niels' oldest daughter Annie was the school teacher. Besides unusual uses, the house did serve the family of Karen Kirsten Swendsen, the second wife, as a residence. She and Neils Peter Larsen raised their five children in this home until 1897.² At that time Neils moved back to his town residence in Pleasant Grove. The north field property, including house and farm, was sold in 1897 to the oldest child, Joseph, and his new bride, Osstella Baker. Joseph built a large brick home just south of the soft-rock house that same year. The soft-rock house has not been used as a residence since that time, and now serves as storage. The current owner is Joseph Wendell Larsen, a son of Joseph and Osstella. He and his wife, Gwen, purchased this property from his parents in 1956 and still reside in the brick home built by his parents.

¹Effie Adams, "Pioneer Home of Neils Peter Larsen," p. 2.

²A letter received by Neils Peter Larsen's daughter, Marie, in Panguitch, Utah, from him, dated 6 April 1891, reveals that by 1891 the family had moved back to Pleasant Grove and the house was being rented for "2 1/2 dollars a month." The original letter is in possession of Ruth H. Henrie, daughter of Marie Larsen, Panguitch, Utah; a copy is in Pleasant Grove Historical Preservation files.