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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. ~~Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.~~

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Firey, John H. House

Other names/site number: _____

2. Location

Street & number: 418 South Arch Street

not for publication

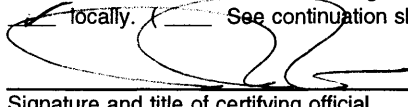
City or town: Aberdeen

vicinity

State: South Dakota Code: SD County: Brown Code: 013 Zipcode: 57401

3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)



SHPD (acting)

2-8-95

Signature and title of certifying official

Date

SD STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of the Keeper

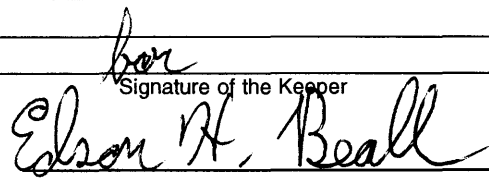
Date of Action

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

 Edson H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

3/23/95

Entered in the
National Register

Firey, John H. House
Name of Property

Brown, SD
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC:single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC:single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:
Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation concrete

walls wood

roof wood

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Firey, John H. House
Name of Property

Brown, SD
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1883-1942

Significant Dates

1883

CA 1912

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

John H. Firey

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Firey, John H. House
Name of Property

Brown, SD
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	2	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing				
3	_ _	_ _	_ _	4	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	_ _	
										_ See continuation sheet	

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared by

Name/Title: Arthur Buntin w/ tech assistance from M Dirr, shpo staff
Organization: Aberdeen/Brown Co. Landmarks Commission Date: December 1994
Street & Number: 1901 Eisenhower Circle Telephone: 605-225-6380
City or Town: Aberdeen State: South Dakota Zip code: 57401

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name: _____
Street & Number: _____ Telephone: _____
City or Town: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

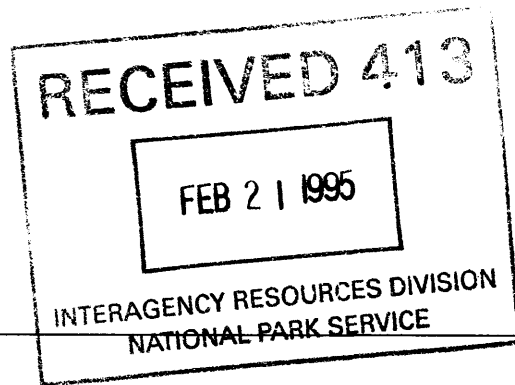
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

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Narrative Description:

The John H. Firey House is a locally significant example of vernacular Colonial Revival styling with a combination of later stylistic ornamental changes in the back of the building. While the facade of the core cube containing living and dining room on the lower level and bedrooms on the upper story represents Colonial Revival as is evident in the door hood, circular window in the gable end and dominant front gable, the remainder of the home is best characterized as a vernacular combination. Local Aberdeen historian, Don Artz considers this house built in 1883 and enlarged later as "one of the oldest in the city. It is the best preserved and the largest of those known to have been built in this early year. Despite additions and modifications it remains handsome, stylish and stately, but without pretense. None of its changes seem out of place. In fact most people will find it difficult to know what is original and what has been added or modified."

The home rests on a 125 foot by 142 foot lot with frontage on Arch Street. It rests on a poured concrete foundation with a brick skirting at ground level. Two distinct bands of windows face south. The living room has a bank of four windows and the enclosed sun porch leading into the dining room has a larger bank of six windows. Overhanging bracketed eaves protrude over these windows and nearby exterior sheathing. The east facade has a small off-center porch entry with gable roof and support columns resting on a brick base. To the north of this entry are two windows on the lower level. The second story has two additional windows with a smaller window to the south and directly above the gabled porch roof. Closer to the roof on the east end is a small ocular window. On the home's north face is one elongated window in the living or sitting room with a twin window several yards to the west. This same facades boasts an elaborate Palladian window with leaded glass. At the extreme west end of the north side is a kitchen entry flanked by two windows. Overhanging eaves project from the steep gable roof to shade and protect the kitchen entry.

An irregular roof extends from a 2 1/2 story height at the east end to a 1 1/2 story height on the west end. A steep gable roof extends to the north and south and is highlighted by wide, decorative over hanging eaves. A smaller but similarly steep gable covers the east entry. Dormers are mounted over the kitchen roof and also over the sun porch roof on the east side. A carved balustrade is located south of the

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last dormer. Chimney placement is at the west end kitchen and in the east end cube.

Stylistic evidence that this is a late 19th century home with early 20th century additions is the elongated windows in the east end and north and south sides of the frontal cube. Features reminiscent of Colonial Revival styles are the Palladian window, ocular window in upper east end, columned and pedimented front porch, the former sweeping east and south side porch removed in 1922, and the high gabled roof. The irregular fenestration and massing are a product of the addition to the back of the building to provide more room for a growing family. This was also done in the 1920s when the porches were removed.

The handcrafted balustrade on the south side indicates an attempt to tie in the Colonial Revival style with the new addition. The oak-trimmed interior including oak trimmed brick fireplace, the hardwood floors, elaborate diamond design parquetry at the thresholds, the built-in china cabinet and the leaded designs in the dining room's large Palladian window show excellent craftsmanship.

Changes to the interior have included a new kitchen window and remodeling of the upstairs bathroom. A new garage (non-contributing) with a connected porch was constructed in 1990.

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Narrative Statement of Significance:

Under criterion B of the National Register criteria, the John H. Firey House is locally significant in the areas of Exploration/Settlement for its association with an early pioneer and businessman of Aberdeen, South Dakota, John Firey. From his arrival in 1882 to his death in 1949, John Firey had an active and varied career as pharmacist, hotelman, farmer, commercial and agricultural real estate developer and manager, politician, civic leader, public speaker and town promoter. Promotion of the Works Progress Administration booklet "Aberdeen, A Middle Border City" published in 1940 was one of his culminating activities as town promoter. As chair of Friends of Aberdeen Committee he and three other Aberdonians were cooperating sponsors of the history.

Migrating from Carthage, Illinois where he worked as a pharmacist, John Firey traveled to Dakota Territory to open a pharmacy in future North Dakota, but on his way stopped at Aberdeen where Father Robert Haire, founder of the first Catholic parishes in Brown County and Aberdeen, persuaded Presbyterian Firey to stay. Firey founded Aberdeen's first pharmacy in September 1882 in a building hauled from nearby Grand Crossing to 101 South Main. This structure was used as a pharmacy until 1888. In 1887, President Cleveland appointed the 28 year old Democrat Postmaster of Aberdeen. In 1888 Firey moved his pharmacy to a more central location at 211 South Main, leasing his site in 1902 to druggist Albert Woodward. Firey then moved into real estate development and management. About this time he helped convince Jewett Brothers, a wholesale grocery business, to diversify and enter wholesale drug distribution. He became the first manager of the Jewett Drug division up to 1908. Jewett operates today as a supplier to drug and variety stores.

In 1907 Firey was appointed to the Milwaukee Railroad board of directors and in 1908 became immigration agent for the railroad during Aberdeen's boom era after the depressed years of the 1890's. He remained in that position until the U.S. government took over the railroads during World War I. Management of immigrant cars and land settlement in the counties west of Aberdeen continued to be profitable for the railroad. Firey traded property from homesteaders who abandoned claims. The city directory lists his profession as both "immigration agent" and "real estate". He purchased a downtown building and converted the upper floors to hotel rooms. His St.

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Nicholas Hotel housed many immigrants and continued under his control until 1936.

When fire destroyed the Woodward Pharmacy in 1912 and adjacent property at 209 S. Main, Firey acquired that lot and built a fireproof two-story structure called the Firey Building. Part of the lower half he leased to Woodward Pharmacy until 1926 and rented out the second floor offices. He maintained his own office on the ground floor. In 1926 he remodeled the lower half for the Woolworth Company who leased it until 1952. Thus, he helped Aberdeen secure one of its most frequented core stores. In 1936 Firey demolished the St. Nicholas Hotel building and built a new structure for the Montgomery Ward Co. Its Georgian architecture still makes it one of the most handsome buildings on Main Street.

The Firey farm on the high west banks of the James River in southern Brown County overlooked the historically rich Rondell area. Known as an early fur trade site and Indian gathering place and referred to by explorer Nicollet in 1839 as the "Oakwood Settlement", his property known as Rondell Park became the site of a Girl Scout camp and was used for family picnics, camping and 4th of July gatherings.

Firey married Susan Mack of Carthage, Illinois in 1883, and returned to Aberdeen where they built a house on Arch Street. The birth of two children, Carl in 1884 and Margaret in 1889, perhaps contributed to the need for more space in their home. John lived in the house until his death at 89 in 1949 and Susan until her death at 88 in 1941. Daughter Margaret continued to live in the house until the Graf family purchased it in 1979.

Thus, John H. Firey contributed to the health and well being of fellow citizens through his pharmacy work which included some minor surgery and bone setting at the drug store. Firey contributed through the Jewett connection to Aberdeen's role as wholesale distributor of drugs. He aided entry of chain store businesses -- Woolworths and Montgomery Ward -- into Aberdeen by providing quarters for those important Main Street businesses. Involved in democratic party politics most of his life, Firey was elected alderman and in 1924 city finance commissioner. As a delegate in 1928 to the Democratic national convention at Houston, he helped nominate Alfred E. Smith for the presidency. Firey was a noted public speaker for the Masons, patriotic meetings, and homestead and pioneer groups. As "the best after dinner speaker in the state" according to the American News, he brought inspiration and humor to many influential citizens. To countless youths as well as adults his Rondell farm and park grounds brought pleasure to visitors and

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picnickers who communed with nature and socialized with other rural and urban folk gathered at that historic spot.

John Firey occupied this house from its date of initial construction in 1883 until his death in 1949. Therefore, residing in the property throughout the significant part of his life. He was responsible for various alterations, additions and upgrades to the property during the historic period. The period of significance of the property is from its date of construction in 1883 to the established fifty year cut-off date for the National Register 1945.

John Firey contributed significantly to the initial settlement and development of the city of Aberdeen. By settling there himself and helping immigrants to secure housing through his real estate ventures, he was bolstering the city. Through his other business ventures of developing the downtown area and his pharmacy he was instrumental in opening the city for future expansion and securing permanency in the commercial area.

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----- . Aberdeen City Directory. 1887, 1899-1900, 1907-1909, and 1909.

Assessor's Office Records. Brown County Courthouse.

Blumenson, John J.-G. Identifying American Architecture. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1982. pp.62-63.

Brown County/Aberdeen Landmark Commission. A Guide to the Hagerty & Lloyd Historic District. Aberdeen, SD: Brown County/Aberdeen Landmark Commission, 1990. p. i.

Brown County Museum and Historical Society. Brown County History, 1980. Aberdeen, SD: North Plains Press, 1980. p. 290.

Graf, Renee. Personal interview by Brad Tennant at Aberdeen, South Dakota. February 27, 1992.

Klein, Marilyn W. and David P. Fogle. Clues to American Architecture. Washington, DC: Starrhill Press, 1985. pp. 28-29.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is contained within the legal description as recorded in the Brown County Register of Deeds office: lots 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, block 94, Hagerty and Lloyd's Addition, city of Aberdeen, Brown County, South Dakota.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the nominated property are based on the legally recorded lot lines of the parcel historically associated with the property.

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Section number photos

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The following information applies to all photos:

John H. Firey House

Brown County, SD

By: John Rau

December 1993

State Historical Preservation Center

1.

View of south camera facing north

2.

Detail view of south

3.

View of east camera facing west

4.

View of interior

5.

View of interior