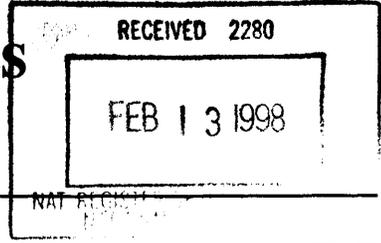


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

229

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM



### 1. Name of Property

historic name: Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office

other name/site number: Silver Forest Inn

### 2. Location

street & number: 15325 Bridger Canyon Road

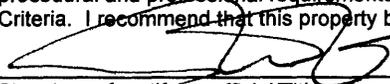
not for publication: na  
vicinity: X

city/town: Bozeman

state: Montana code: MT county: Gallatin code: 031 zip code: 59715

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally.

 \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date 2-3-98

Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency or bureau (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

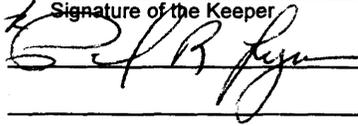
In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <u>  </u> see continuation sheet		<u>3/12/98</u>
<u>  </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u>  </u> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u>  </u> determined not eligible for the National Register <u>  </u> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u>  </u> removed from the National Register <u>  </u> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u>  </u> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

---

**5. Classification**

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<b>Ownership of Property:</b> Private	<b>Number of Resources within Property</b>	
<b>Category of Property:</b> Building	Contributing	Noncontributing
<b>Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:</b> na	<u>  1  </u>	<u>    </u> building(s)
<b>Name of related multiple property listing:</b> na	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
	<u>  1  </u>	<u>    </u> TOTAL

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions:**

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

**Current Functions:**

DOMESTIC/Inn

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification:**

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS  
Other: Rustic

**Materials:**

foundation: stone  
walls: log  
roof: wood shingle  
other:

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**Narrative Description**

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The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office is tucked into the West side of a timbered knoll that faces across an alpine meadow and the sparkling waters of Bridger Creek. The majestic snow-capped crests of the Bridger mountain range provide a backdrop for the site. The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office looks outward through a shroud of pine and fir trees like the timbers from which it is crafted.

Built as a residential retreat for the owners of the adjacent Flaming Arrow Ranch, the plan is of an inverted 'L'; social and living functions are housed in the wing that forms the base and sleeping accommodations occupy the other wing. Both wings are low pitched, gable roofed volumes. The social wing is farthest downhill along the slope of the knoll. Its north - south alignment follows the contours of the slope; in terms of size it is slightly dominant over the uphill sleeping wing. An eave dormer is positioned in the re-entrant corner of the two wings and announces the main entrance into the dwelling. Parking for guests is interspersed among the uphill trees and the Inn is approached by a winding log-lined pathway to the decorative wood entry door. In addition to the entrance dormer, modest eave dormers can be seen midway along each side of the uphill wing, and the northwest corner (toe of the 'L') is accented by a romantic three story octagonal log turret. The turret is visually balanced by an open wood deck at the southwest corner. A hand-crafted log balustrade graces the deck.

The lodge is one-story above grade at the uphill end of the sleeping wing as it tucks into the timbered hillside. The slope of the hill allows the social wing to fully daylight into a two-story facade along the downhill side. A stone faced foundation wall grows out of the hillside to shelter the lower level; all upper walls are of log. The roof is surfaced with wood shingles; the generous overhang is open with the roof sheathing exposed on the underside, and the exposed ends of the log rafters and purlins articulate the edge of the roof. A narrow plumb wood fascia surrounds the facets of the octagonal roof of the turret.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 1

The upper floor of the social wing houses living, dining, and entry areas; the east wing provides space for guest bedrooms toward the east end of the lodge as well as space for a kitchen adjacent to the dining space and east end of the deck. The lower level serves additional guest rooms, hot tub, and conversation space. The main floor of the turret functions as a solarium and the uppermost floor of the turret is a special guest suite.

The downhill meadow elevation displays the turret to the left, open deck to the right, and a field stone fiddle back chimney/fireplace in the center. The chimney is flanked by large fixed windows at the main floor and French door to the right of the stone at the lower level.

The architectural design of the north elevation includes a spaced pair of rectangular wood double-hung windows near the uphill left corner, and a square wood double-hung window midway along the sleeping wing before it offsets at the re-entrant corner of the two wings. The projecting north offset of the social wing includes a pair of 2/2 divided lite windows near the east entryway corner and another pair of 2/2 divided lite windows high in the wall near the intersection with the corner turret to the west.

From left to right, the up slope east elevation includes a rectangular wood double-hung window; a square wood double-hung window; a wood rear entry door that accesses the bedroom corridor; and another rectangular wood, double-hung window between the door and the northeast corner of the house.

The south facade features multiple tall narrow divided lites that look out onto the deck from both the kitchen and dining rooms. Near the left end of the elevation, a kitchen door provides access to the deck. There is a bay window immediately adjacent to the kitchen door (recent addition), and the right end of the elevation is punctuated with a spaced pair of rectangular wood casement windows. The kitchen door and bay window occur below the south eave dormer previously noted along the uphill wing.

All facades of the multi-faceted turret have large fixed pane windows set in the log walls to capture the inspiring view; the concrete walls of the lowest floor of the turret have been surfaced with imbricated wood shingles (a recent modification).

Window and door frames in the west wing are of hand-hewn half round logs; openings in the east wing are cased with flat wood moldings. In the manner of romantic log architecture, the Swedish notched corner log extensions are exaggerated and V-flared from mid-height toward the top and bottom of the walls. The turret also has extended corners that are cut to reflect the angle of the intersections of the walls. Chinking of the 9" to 10" logs is of original construction and is cementitious. Gable ends of the wings are of log to match the walls below.

With the exception of the turret and living room, the windows have divided lites with delicate muntin and mullion patterns.

On the interior, the entry hall features a log stair that accesses the turret. The stair is detailed with a log handrail, log balustrade, and massive log newel post at the bottom. Narrow width tongue-and-groove flooring has been utilized throughout and the walls of the living and dining area are appointed with a wainscot of veneered wood paneling with rustic wood batten joints to complement the log walls which are exposed to the interior.

The ceiling of the living room is "exploded" and follows the profile of the roof line above. Decorative log "trusses" support the roof within the space and visually contribute to the ambience of the lodge. The "trusses" include a full width log chord that spans the space at the top of the log walls, log king posts at quarter points that extend up to a log collar tie, which in turn has a log center post that continues to the ridge purlin above. This quasi-Chippendale pattern is integrated with the pattern of the exposed log roof purlins at the underside of the roof to impart interest, warmth, and dignity to the interior of the lodge. The sloped ceilings are of wood throughout.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 2

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The warmth, romance, and mellowness of the Inn is focused by the drama of the interior spaces and the view from within; the use of natural wood and stone from nearby assure that the building fits with the land, and the structure occupies the forested hillside with dignity and grace.

The house is located on its original site and maintains integrity of design and materials. The wall and roof assemblies display high quality log workmanship, typical of the craftsmen of the period, in the wall and roof assemblies. The construction methodology of foundation, footing, and reinforced concrete is not representative of the relatively high degree of engineering knowledge of 1934, but is a good example of builders' methods of the period. In general, the residential retreat conveys the same feeling and sense of character intended by the designers.

The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office remained an unfinished shell until 1958, with no heating or plumbing systems. It was, however, sealed from the elements and served occasionally as temporary shelter. When completed, the 1958 construction is discernable from the original design in the use of large-pane picture windows (that would have been divided lites, historically) and in the imbricated shingles that have been added at the base of the turret, both of which are reversible. The significance of the building lies in the design and the log craftsmanship.

This modest log "castle", with its reflection of mellow Victorian massing and natural materials, speaks to the emerging recreational interest of the public in the wilderness of the West -- at a time when the collision of leisure time and popular automobile ownership permitted a non-industrial view of America's resources. This perception of western landscapes is with us still and will continue to be enjoyed for generations to come in places like the Silver Forest Inn.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): na

Period(s) of Significance: 1934-1940

Significant Person(s): na

Significant Dates: 1934

Cultural Affiliation: na

Architect/Builder: Arthur L. McKinney/  
Wallace R. Diteman

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

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The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office is significant under National Register Criterion C because of its stylistic design features, method of construction, and association with a distinct and specific architectural expression as it evolved in the West during the period of 1910 - 1940. It is an excellent example of the Western Rustic style, a romanticized and embellished later version of the building technology of pioneering forefathers as they settled in the West. During the opening years of the twentieth century, log construction was refined and exaggerated as it was applied to dude ranches, summer camps and recreational facilities designed to lure tourists to the state. The Inn was originally designed to house the Arthur L. McKinney family and provide an office for the Flaming Arrow Ranch complex. It serves as a visual reminder of the dream of the McKinney family to create a summer home and office overlooking the boys' "vacational/educational" camp, a summer theater, and schools of art and drama in the inspirational Bridger Mountains. Though the dream was not to become a reality, the Flaming Arrow Ranch ultimately established Bridger Canyon as a major outdoor recreation area and introduced recreationists, "dudes," and Boy Scouts to rustic camp living. The McKinneys residence and the Flaming Arrow Lodge (now under separate ownership) are all that remain of the ranch.

### History of the Flaming Arrow Ranch

1934 was a time of expansion and expression in America; citizens had more time for recreation, they had the increasing freedom of the automobile, the country worked toward economic recovery, and rugged sites in the West became more enticing to both visitors and developers. The Arthur McKinney family responded to the opportunities creating a recreational camp in the remote but increasingly accessible mountains of Montana.

Arthur L. McKinney came from a family with a multi-generational history in the mercantile business in Indiana. In addition to his own mercantile interests, McKinney devoted as much leisure as possible to the study of music. While he specialized in playing both piano and trombone, he also "found an outlet" in writing music, which was "well received in musical circles." His original compositions, "When the Wheat to Gold" and "I Told Her So Long Years Ago" were highly acclaimed. His wife (Lena) was a former teacher who shared her husband's interests in education, entertainment, the arts and music.

The couple's son, Duane, "active on the legitimate stage since the age of ten", sampled the educational offerings of numerous schools, including, Shortridge, the Culver Military Academy, Harrisburg Academy, the John Heron Art Institute of Indiana, Art Institute of Chicago and the Goodman Memorial School of the Spoken Drama, where in 1934 (at age 20), he was a member of the faculty. The young McKinney was also a stage and scenic designer for the drama department of DePaul University in Chicago.

It is conceivable, given the time period and his association with the Culver Military Academy, that Duane McKinney may have attended (or at least had knowledge of) the Skyland Camp on Bowman Lake in Glacier National Park, which functioned as an extension of the Culver Military Academy in Indiana. The Rainbow Lodge, which is all that remains today of the Skyland camp, is built of tamarack logs with a native stone fireplace. It parallels the buildings of the Flaming Arrow Ranch in many ways, including its use of native building materials, construction and historical function.

The desire for a "family" summer business and residence in beautiful Montana, utilizing their collective vocations and avocations, culminated in the McKinneys initial purchase of one-half section of land in Bridger Canyon. The land, located on "old Arrows

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 1

Point," was said to be the sight of a great Sioux-Nez Perce battle which, according to legend, ended in a truce symbolized by a flaming arrow ceremony.

Inspired by the legend, and their own varied interests, the McKinneys designed a "vacational-educational Ranch for Fine Boys," joining the growing dude ranch business in Montana, but with notable planned additions. The Flaming Arrow Ranch was also to include the Silver Forest Playhouse, a summer theater (designed to seat 1000), schools of art and drama, and a summer artists colony.

Some of the inspiration for the Flaming Arrow Ranch likely came from the McKinneys visits to the 7-Up Guest Ranch near Lincoln, Montana and it was there that they met Wallace R. Diteman.

"Wally" Diteman arrived in Montana from Washington State in 1929. Late in the same year he went to work at the Bowers 7-Up Ranch, first doing farm work and later building the log cabins and lodge for the facilities' evolution to "guest" ranch. He was "wrangling dudes" when the McKinneys stayed at the 7-Up in 1933, and in the spring of 1934, he moved to Bozeman to supervise the construction of the Flaming Arrow Ranch.

J.A. Stafford, of Bozeman, handled many of the local business matters for the McKinney family and Arthur McKinney directed the building project from his Indianapolis home. Stafford advertised widely in the state for "expert log construction men" and when respondents "proved their ability," they were sent to the camp, where construction started in September of 1934.

The professional services of an architect were not retained for the design of the Flaming Arrow complex. The ideas and sketches of the McKinney family were communicated by mail to construction supervisor and builder Wally Diteman who translated, enhanced and executed those ideas. The capabilities of Diteman and the high level of skill of the craftsmen on the work were significant factors in the success of the project.

Through the winter of 1934, with the Depression still a major factor, the work force of up to 75 men created a complex of thirteen major buildings. The project received considerable attention in the local press. The McKinneys were secretive regarding the planned use of the complex (even the workers were not told) and rumors were rampant in Bozeman about the "mystery of Bridger Canyon," which the Chronicle called "the scene of the most elaborate, costly and artistic recreation plant ever constructed in this part of the country." Speculation about a potential nudist colony, school with anti-Hitler teachings for Jewish youth, moving picture camp, playground for the idle rich, and military academy, among other uses, was laid to rest in December of 1934 when the McKinneys visited Bozeman and unveiled their plans for the Flaming Arrow Ranch.

Arthur McKinney expected daily progress reports and photos from the Flaming Arrow project. From his Indianapolis headquarters, he shipped materials, supplies and equipment. He launched a national and international promotional campaign for the ranch and created liaisons with both the Northern Pacific and Milwaukee railroads. He lobbied the Gallatin County Commissioners to gravel the Bridger Canyon road, and later the Montana Highway Commission for a state highway to service the area.

Through the winter of 1934, workers and men transporting materials fought the primitive road to the building site. Methods of construction were limited to what could be done by hand, with minimal assistance from teams of horses to move the materials and to provide the power for a "gin-pole" hoist, since mechanization had not yet reached the Bridger Canyon. By spring, "340,000 board feet of Bridger lumber" had been put into ten double cabins, the large recreation/dining lodge, a theater and an "elaborate" home for the McKinney family.

With advance reservations pouring in for the 1935 (July and August) season for both the camp and theater, and a special Northern Pacific "Flaming Arrow" Pullman car ready to transport New York and Chicago boys to the camp, Arthur McKinney died in

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 2

Indiana, in May, at the age of 49. Construction was halted on the camp and the workers were released. The planned 1935 season was canceled and reservations returned. Although announcing plans to open for the 1936 season, the McKinney heirs decided instead to sell the Flaming Arrow Ranch.

Wally Diteman remained as foreman/caretaker of the facility for the McKinneys and in 1935 opened the complex for winter sports. The large lodge building provided a comfortable gathering place for recreational participants and observers. The Ditemans supplied a team and sled to transport groups of skiers to the Ranch, which was not easily accessible during the winter. The Flaming Arrow Lodge additionally offered indoor sports as well as games and dancing for the less adventurous.

On Thanksgiving day 1935, the large Silver Forest Theater was "opened up" to provide spectators an indoor ski jumping exhibition, where special participants skied to, through, and out the other side of the unfinished building. The required modifications to the building for this event could explain the theater's deteriorated condition when Eva and Erwin Lachenmaier purchased the Flaming Arrow Ranch, in 1946. The theater was later dismantled for lumber.

The McKinney residence remained an unfinished shell, with foundation, roof and log walls completed. With no plumbing or heating system, the elaborate, turreted building served as housing for seasonal hired help or on occasion, shelter from a sudden storm. Because the lodge building was more complete, with plumbing and heat, the Lachenmaiers adapted the interior of the eastern end of the large lodge building for family living quarters and readied the cabins for guests. Among their earliest customers were state highway workers, building the road promised to Arthur McKinney over twelve years earlier. Linemen bringing the Canyon's first electricity were also guests, along with a growing number of summer "dudes" and winter recreationists.

In 1956, the Lachenmaiers sold the ranch to the Yellowstone Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America and for about twenty summers, Arthur McKinney's dream of a "vacation/educational camp for fine boys," though modified, became something of a reality.

The McKinney residence sold separately to Harold and Margaret Titus in 1958. Twenty-four years after the initial envelope construction, the residence was completed and served as housing for a family.

Patrick L. O'Niell, the current owner, operates the facility as a bed and breakfast under the name of the Silver Forest Inn, borrowed from the ill-fated theater, which was destroyed over sixty years ago.

### Architectural Significance

The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office exhibits and emphasizes the characteristics of the Rustic architectural style in many ways, including the romantic, natural setting with the use of a limited palette of natural materials which integrate the building with the site, and the refined and exaggerated use of log in the construction.

The public perception of log construction of the era was summed up by the editors of the "Sunset Cabin Plan Book" published in 1938:

Mention of a "cabin in the woods" brings a vision to the average man of one thing - a LOG cabin. And although few people will ever build a real log cabin, most of us have inherited from our pioneer ancestors a romantic attachment to the sturdily constructed homes of our early settlers. The pioneers built of logs primarily because they had no other materials and also because they needed a shelter that would be a protection against Indians, wild animals, and rough weather.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 3

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The McKinney family obviously studied many examples of the style so popular in resort lodges in the West, before selecting the site and designing the Flaming Arrow Ranch. Drawing from Indian legends and frontier themes, which were promoted to the public largely by Hollywood movies, they joined the growing number of Montana guest ranches that deliberately played to the public thirst for the adventure of the "Old West."

The Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office also significantly reflects the able craftsmanship of those who were required to "prove their ability" in traditional log building prior to working on the impressive undertaking.

The craftsmen apparently translated rather sketchy plans into a readily identifiable, early twentieth century style with simple, direct methods of construction. A high degree of artistry is visible in the saddle notching, hand-hewn door and window frames, and close-fitting beams, rafters and columns.

Nearly sixty years after its construction, the well-preserved Inn remains a testament to fulfilled and unfulfilled dreams. Its presence speaks eloquently to the design and construction of early twentieth century log architecture and the development of the recreation in Montana.

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### 9. Major Bibliographic References

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See continuation sheet

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other -- Specify Repository:

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property:** Less than one

**UTM References:**   **Zone**       **Easting**       **Northing**  
                          12       509100       5072560

**Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)):** W ½ Section 29, Township 1 North, Range 7 East, M.P.M.

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### Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the westerly right-of-way of Highway S 370 (6) which is 2,8555 feet North of the South Quarter corner of Section 29, T1N, R7E, M.P.M., and 472.0 feet westerly at an angle of S86°30' W from the north-south center line of Section 29; continuing westerly a distance of 250 feet; thence southerly at an angle of 90°, a distance of 565 feet; thence easterly at an angle of 90°, a distance of 511.7 feet to a point on the westerly right-of-way of said highway; thence northerly and westerly along said right-of-way to the point of beginning (according to a survey recorded in Book 148 of Deeds at page 358-A).

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### Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn, based on legally recorded boundary lines, to include the land surrounding the building that has been historically associated with the building and conveys the property's historic setting..

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### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title:     Ken and Ellen Sievert, Partners  
organization:   Sievert & Sievert, Consultants     date: September 1997  
street & number: 1602 3rd West Hill Drive     telephone: 406-761-6955  
city or town:    Great Falls                     state: MT     zip code: 59404

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### Property Owner

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name/title:     Patrick L. O'Neill  
street & number: 6425 Sonoma Highway     telephone:  
city or town:    Santa Rosa                     state: CA     zip code: 95409

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9

Flaming Arrow Ranch House and Office  
Gallatin County, Montana

Page 1

## Bibliographic References

Dillon, Ralph P., ed. Sunset Cabin Plan Book. San Francisco: Lane Publishing Co., 1938.

Griffin, Harvey. "One Man's Dream Partially Fulfilled" in Billings Gazette, Jan. 16, 1969.

Jay, Milton T., ed. History of Jay County. Indianapolis, Ind.: Historical Publishing Co., 1922.

Ober, Michael J., "Glacier's Skyland Camps," Montana: The Magazine of Western History. XXIII (Summer 1973): 30-39.

Peavy, Linda Sellars. Canyon Cookery: a Gathering of Recipes and Recollections from Montana's Scenic Bridger Canyon. Bozeman, Mont.: Bridge Canyon Women's Club, c. 1978.

## Bozeman Chronicle articles:

"Your Guess is Good," November 17, 1934, p. 2.

"McKinney Deed Now on Record," November 21, 1934, p. 6.

"Will Explain Mystery Camp," December 2, 1934, p. 2.

"McKinney Explains Bridger Canyon Plans," December 5, 1934, p. 1.

"To Tell Story of Playhouse," April 20, 1935, p. 6.

"A.L. M'kinney Dies in East," May 9, 1935, p. 3.

"Ranch Project Off For Year," May 24, 1935, p. 5.

"Winter Sports Resorts Starts," November 24, 1935, p. 4.

"Flaming Arrow Winter Sports," November 27, 1935, p. 6.

## Personal Communication with Ken and Ellen Sievert

Personal history of Irl O. Sievert, one of the broadaxe craftsman who worked on the Flaming Arrow Lodge in 1934-35, as recounted to his son Kenneth R. Sievert.

Interview with Wallace E. Diteman, son of Wallace R. Diteman, on Dec. 5, 1993.

Telephone interview with Sonya Lachenmaier Berg on Jan. 16, 1994

Telephone interview with Eva Lachenmaier

## Primary Location of Additional data:

Wally E. Diteman, Bozeman, Mt. Personal correspondence from the McKinney family to Wallace R. Diteman, drawings, construction documents, invoices, payroll records, original promotional brochure.