

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received **OCT 29 1985**

date entered **DEC 13 1985**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic ROCK CHURCH

and/or common LDS AUBURN WARD MEETING HOUSE

2. Location

street & number CORNER OF 2ND WEST AND 1ST SOUTH STREET, BLOCK #15 not for publication

city, town PUBLIC SQUARE AUBURN vicinity of

state WYOMING code 056 county LINCOLN code 023

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>n/a</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>n/a</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name STAR VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

street & number BOX 1212

city, town AFTON vicinity of state WYOMING 83110

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. LINCOLN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

street & number SAGE AND GARNET STREET

city, town KEMMERER vicinity of state WYOMING

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WYOMING HISTORIC SITES SURVEY has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date MAY, 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

city, town CHEYENNE vicinity of state WYOMING

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u> N/A </u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Auburn Church's structural and building material is stone, a rare architectural feature in the Star Valley. The stone is rough-cut with irregular coursing giving the otherwise simple, rectangular building a decorative touch. It has very simple rectangular windows, regularly spaced along the sides. Each side has three bays with concrete sills and lentils. It has a front, central door with concrete sill and lentil as well. There is an arch above the door with radiating stone voisoirs and a stone sill. Inside the arch are the words "Auburn Ward." The structure's roof is a fairly steep gable with paneled overhang and the gable ends have some molding. The end chimney is corbelled brick. Auburn LDS Church is void of ornamentation except for the arch, but the rough-cut stone serves as a form of ornamentation in itself. Also the original glass windows are still intact, although they are presently covered with plywood to protect them. The building is an impressive piece of solid masonry work, all of it hand-worked. Although plain in architecture, it is, nevertheless, very beautiful. The soft earth tone colors of the rock range from beige through rose to shades of brown, and keep the rather plain lines of the building from seeming severe. The building measures 30X15 feet. It originally had double wooden doors with glass panels above. This change and a few necessary interior changes are the only alterations. The building retains a high level of integrity of setting, design, location, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Inside was a good solid floor which served until about 1923, at which time it was replaced with one of hardwood. Curtains separated the one room into sections for classes. The rostrum at the far end also served as a classroom. Although the rostrum was small it also served as a stage for the many theatrical productions which were such an important part of the community. A trap door in the floor of the rostrum was a great help for special effects. Later a hole was opened in the rear from the outside and fire wood was stored under the rostrum.

8. Significance

Period	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1889 **Builder/Architect** UNKNOWN

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Auburn Rock church is the only 19th century building still in use in the area and is one of the oldest in the Star Valley. Constructed in 1889 it embodies the type, period, and method of construction utilized by early pioneers for buildings of major importance. This structure was for many years the only rock, and the largest public building within the community. It is associated with the regions strong Mormon hegemony which established foundations for morality, nurtured a strong community spirit, encouraged social cohesion, and exerted a conservative influence that accelerated the development of well ordered civic-minded communities. The church was the focal point of social and cultural evolution and provided an opportunity to set aside the daily toil and gather with neighbors to participate in various voluntary activities. The communities isolation and the impact of the church have not only significantly affected but virtually established the broad patterns of history for the area and the region. The building served as a place of worship for the Latter-Day-Saints and a meeting place for the entire community. Activities in the building included dances, plays, elections, operas, parties, bazaars, reunions, picnics, and patriotic and holiday celebrations. Generations of Boy Scouts and other youth activities, public meetings and service groups as well as religious services have met in the rock meeting house.

(SEE ADDENDUM)

9. Major Bibliographical References

CALL, LEE R., EDITOR. STAR VALLEY AND ITS COMMUNITIES. 1966, STAR VALLEY INDEPENDENT, AFTON, WYOMING. "HISTORY OF AUBURN." pp. 100-106.

(SEE ADDENDUM)

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Auburn, Wyoming-Idaho

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	2	4	9	19	9	12	10	4	17	3	17	4	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at the NE corner of Lot One, Block Fifteen, Auburn Townstie, and running West along the north property line 148 feet; then South along the line parallel with the East property line, 125 feet; then East along the northerly property line 148 feet and back to the easterly property line 125 feet to the beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (SEE ADDENDUM)

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Miller Hokanson

organization Star Valley Historical Society date October 16, 1984

street & number Box 1212 telephone n/a

city or town Afton state Wyoming

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Robert W. Bush

title Director and State Historic Preservation Officer date 10/23/85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

William B. Bushong date 12/13/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet ROCK CHURCH (SIG.) Item number 8 Page 1

The old rock church in Auburn, Wyoming is one of the oldest buildings in Star Valley and the only nineteenth century structure still in use in the area. Constructed in the fall of 1889, the church was for several years the only rock structure. The building served as a place of worship for the Latter-day Saints and a meeting place for the entire community. Activities in the building included dances, plays, operas, parties, bazaars, reunions, picnics and patriotic and holiday celebrations. Generations of Boy Scout and other youth activities, public meetings and service groups as well as religious services have met in the rock meetinghouse.

Star Valley, summer home for the Shoshone Indians, was visited by Wilson Price Hunt's Astorian fur trappers as early as 1812. Traversed by emigrants bound for the Oregon Country from 1856 to 1860 on the Lander Cutoff, the high mountain valley became summer pasture land for cattle belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt beds in the area were important to the Indians as well as trappers, emigrants, explorers and herders; and exports were made far into the Oregon Territory. After the death of the great Mormon colonizer Brigham Young in 1877, the Mormon Church continued to make settlements. Permanent settlers moved into Star Valley two years later in 1879 and settled the west side of the north end of the Upper Valley. It was not until the spring of 1888 that these hardy pioneer farmers and ranchers surveyed the townsite of Auburn into twenty-four, ten acre blocks. The next summer after crops were harvested the rock church was erected on the public square in the center of the new townsite. The building served for all religious and public meetings. The meetinghouse was even a place of refuge and safety when settlers were threatened by Indian attacks. When a larger frame building was constructed in 1926 the stone building proved better protection during the cold winters and occupancy continued. Three larger houses of worship have been built in succession in Auburn but it is the old rock church which stands as a local landmark. The solid walls symbolize the strengths and values of those who built, lived in, and served in the community. The building is a monument to the early pioneers of Star Valley. In 1984 the old rock church was deeded to the Star Valley Historical Society. Restoration of the building to its original condition will assure its continued use both as a public building and as a historical tie with our past.

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Continuation sheet

ROCK CHURCH BIB.

Item number 9

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History of Wyoming, T.A. Larson
University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1978

Great Basin Kingdom, Leonard J. Arrington
University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1958

The Gathering of Zion, Wallace Stegruer
Westwater Press Inc., Salt Lake City, Utah, 1981

Americas Western Frontiers, John A. Hawgood
New York, NY, Alfred A. Knopf, 1967

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Continuation sheet ROCK CHURCH Item number 10 (GEO. DATA) Page 1

This boundary encompasses the historic rock church on its original site.
It does not include non-contributing structures or excess land area.