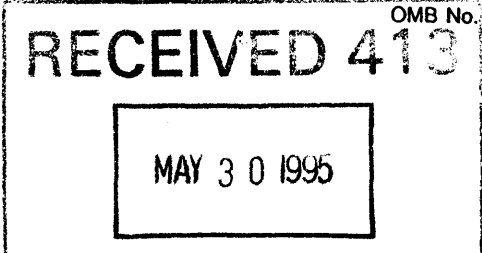


7-014



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. See instructions in *How to 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 (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Monte Vista Library  
other names/site number Monte Vista Historical Society; 5RN514

2. Location

street & number 110 Jefferson Street  N/A not for publication  
city or town Monte Vista  N/A vicinity  
state Colorado code CO county Rio Grande code 105 zip code 81144

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)  
[Signature] May 26, 1995  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State Historic Preservation Office  
State of 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 certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper  
Edson H. Beall  
Entered in the National Register 6/30/95  
Date of Action

Monte Vista Library  
Name of Property

Rio Grande County, CO  
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	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN  
MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls STONE

roof ASPHALT

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Monte Vista Library  
Name of Property

Rio Grande County, CO  
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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1895-1919

**Significant Dates**

1895

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

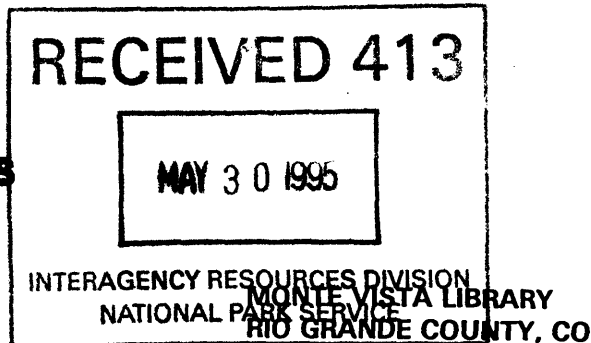
Name of repository:

Monte Vista Historical Society

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1



### DESCRIPTION

Now home of the local historical society, the Library building in Monte Vista is located near the intersection of Park Avenue (U.S. Highway 285) and Jefferson Street, just north of the Carnegie Public Library. Surrounded by grass, the small stone building has a flat asphalt roof that gently slopes to the rear. Measuring 16 feet wide and 22 feet long, the one-story building is constructed of quarry-faced, pink rhyolite. A small stone chimney pierces the roofline at the northeast corner.

The Library faces west onto Jefferson Street. A sidewalk leads up to the centrally located entrance. There are two small light fixtures on either side of the eight-panel oak door and transom. The transom light is rose colored glass etched with "The Monte Vista Historical Society." On each side of the entry is a tall fixed sash window of plate glass. A wooden "library" sign extends across the front of the roofline. It is a replica of the one seen in the historic photograph. The square-cut rhyolite is regularly coursed. Two courses of stone form a flower box under each window, flank the sidewalk, and wrap around to the south elevation.

The north and south elevations are identical, except for the stone flower box that runs the length of south elevation. The regularly-coursed rhyolite on these elevations is a rough-cut. The rear elevation consists of uncoursed, rough-cut stone. Below a wood lintel is a door with a clear transom and a tall window.

The interior consists of one open room with a small bathroom in the southeast corner. The walls have been left with the rhyolite exposed. There is a pressed tin ceiling with a picture rail. A gas-burning stove sits in the northeast corner.

In 1987, the building was in a deteriorating condition with mortar crumbling and interior damage from frozen water pipes bursting. Master stonemason, John Hofmann, cleaned and tuckpointed the stone, inside and out. Because of the extensive damage, Hofmann had to gut the interior. He removed panelling that had been attached to the stone walls and water-logged plaster from the ceiling. A subfloor and top oak floor were laid. A reproduction tin ceiling was installed with a picture rail beneath it. Numerous square nails remain in the walls where, it is assumed, there were book shelves. The building was re-plumbed and a new interior wall constructed. The double hung sash windows were replaced at this time. The flower box, etched transom glass, and the lights flanking the front door were installed in 1987. The overhead sign was installed in 1989.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 & 8 Page 2

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO

**DESCRIPTION (continued)**

Directly behind the building sits a 14 by 14 foot metal storage shed with gabled roof resting on wood beams. Placed there in the 1970s by the folks at the Carnegie Library, this shed is noncontributing.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Library is significant for its association with the social history of the town, specifically the efforts of the ladies of the Monte Vista Library Association to provide a public reading room. The building is also historically significant in the area of community planning and development as it reflects a conscious effort to create an infrastructure by constructing a library building, the first library building in Monte Vista and in the San Luis Valley. The building is also architecturally significant as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period of construction--the town's formative years when stone structures were replacing the earlier wood buildings.

-----

Monte Vista owes its existence and growth to the cultivation and economic development of the surrounding rich agricultural lands. Early in 1881, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad extended a narrow-gauge line from Alamosa, Colorado to the present site of Monte Vista. The railroad erected a section house and a water tower, which was named Lariat Siding. Investors and excursionists came by train seeking opportunities close to the large canal project started by T. C. Henry to promote the growth of the agriculture industry. By early 1884, newly arrived developers platted the area and the town was incorporated as Henry. The Henry Town and Land Company lost their investments to the Travelers' Insurance Company, who reincorporated the town in 1886 and named it Monte Vista.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO

**SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

The Library grew from a dream of a group of pioneer women. On August 4, 1885, the Women's Literary Club was organized for community improvement and the establishment of a circulating library. The club donated fifty dollars to get a circulating library started. The books were first kept in the back of the Fassett General Store with Lillian L. Fassett becoming the first librarian. By their September meeting, it was reported that 100 volumes had been donated and the ladies hoped there would be 500 volumes by the end of the year.

On January 18, 1887, the Monte Vista Library Association was incorporated. The Fassett store became too small to house all the books and the growing collection was moved to the second story of the Bonner Meade building. Fire was a common and disastrous occurrence in early Monte Vista and in 1894 the building housing the library books burned, destroying all the books and many city records that were stored there.

Rather than continue the practice of utilizing portions of other buildings to house books and a reading room, the decision was made to make an addition to the community's infrastructure--a library building. With their usual resourcefulness, the women of the Monte Vista Library Association set to work raising money for a new building. They compiled a cookbook and made aprons which they sold at the local fair. They also served meals at various civic events. By 1895 the ladies reached their goal, with enough funds for a new building.

The ladies of the Library Association moved quickly to build a new and permanent home for their library. Years before, in 1888, the Library Association had purchased Lot 3 of Block 23 on Jefferson Street, for "library purposes only." The loss of all the library books to fire served as impetus for the construction of a library "reading room" and repository for the new books to be acquired. This property in downtown Monte Vista was a prime location for Monte Vista's first public library building. With typical fervor the ladies set about negotiating for the volunteer labor of the many stonemasons and carpenters who were erecting several stone buildings in the business district.

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National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO

## SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

On Saturday evening of August 3, 1895 the ladies of the Monte Vista Library Association gave their annual reception at the new library building. The San Luis Valley Graphic reported that "guests were invited to bring suitable books for the library and the request was liberally responded to. Refreshments were served, the proceeds of which are to go to the purchase of new books." The president, Mrs. H. H. Marsh, provided an historical review of the association's patient work throughout the years to build up a fine library only to see it entirely destroyed by the Bonner block fire.

The collection of books eventually outgrew the small building and in 1916, the town began negotiating with the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie for assistance in building a new building large enough to meet the needs of the growing community. This little stone building served as a library and reading room until the opening of the Carnegie Public Library on June 4, 1919.

Used as a rental property to help defray library costs, the building's subsequent uses included a meat market, tailor shop, dry cleaner and barber shop. In 1987, the Monte Vista Historical Society obtained a 20 year lease from the Monte Vista (Carnegie) Library Board for the badly deteriorating building. The Historical Society obtained funds for restoration and now use the building as a history center.

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In 1884, the first commercial ventures in Monte Vista, a handful of wooden storefront buildings, developed close to the early railroad depot. After 1886 the commercial buildings moved west along the main street (First Avenue) and the town began to mushroom. The main intersection, First Avenue and Adams Street, was developed with stone buildings that set the architectural design for subsequent construction. Wooden buildings were replaced by more fireproof, solid buildings with some architectural detailing. This new construction was a response to two factors: a confidence in the town's development and the close availability of an abundant, high quality building material.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO**SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

Many of these buildings are either gone or have lost their historical character through alterations. Some of the remaining buildings have been recognized as a National Register Historic District. The Monte Vista Downtown Historic District, listed in 1991, is located at the west edge of the initial permanent construction. (The Library, located more than a block away, was not included within the district boundaries.) The buildings within this district were all erected between 1889 and 1921. Of the eleven buildings included in the district, only three pre-date the Library.

A common feature of the buildings constructed during this period was the use of rhyolite, a locally quarried volcanic tuff. The stonemason firm of Campbell and Edwards came to Monte Vista prior to 1889. By that time the townspeople were looking for building materials more durable than wood. Seven miles south of town the stonemasons located a volcanic stone of superior quality. The stone is light and soft when quarried, but hardens upon exposure to air and is fireproof. Coinciding with the discovery of the quarried stone close to Monte Vista, was the presence of numerous skilled builders and stonemasons who had located in the new town. The beginning of Monte Vista's stone construction began in 1889 with the discovery of this apparently endless supply of high quality building stone just outside of town.

The oldest remaining commercial stone building in Monte Vista is the 1890 State Bank located at 800 First Avenue. The two stone commercial buildings adjacent to the bank were constructed in 1892. With so much stone construction going on in town, it was a logical decision in 1895 by the ladies of the Library Association to utilize the same material and type of construction for their new library building.

The Library represents this period of stone construction. The building reflects a period of stabilization, careful planning, growth, and a commitment to permanent settlement.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 & 10 Page 6

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Colorado Secretary of State. Articles of Incorporation for "The Monte Vista Library Association." 22 January 1887.

Gokturk, Cynthia M. "Public Libraries in the San Luis Valley." Manuscript, Adams State College, 1984.

Monte Vista Historical Society. Monte Vista Downtown Historic District. Monte Vista: Monte Vista Historical Society, 1992.

----- . "Monte Vista Downtown Historic District" National Register nomination form. 1 November 1991.

Monte Vista Journal 22 October 1937.

Riggenbach, Emma M. A Bridge to Yesterday. Monte Vista High Valley Press, 1982.

----- . "Monte Vista Public Library 84 Years Old, 10,000 Books." The Monte Vista Journal July 1969.

San Luis Valley Graphic, 8, 22 August 1885; 29 July 1895.

Time-Life Books, Inc. The Women. The Old West Series. 1978.

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 3, block 23 in the town of Monte Vista

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel of land historically associated with the Library building.

Monte Vista Library

Rio Grande County, CO

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 398940 4159640
Zone Easting Northing
2

3 Zone Easting Northing
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 Peggy Barr, President & Peg Schall, Treasurer

organization Monte Vista Historical Society date 2-15-95

street & number 110 Jefferson Street / PO Box 323 telephone (719) 852-2518

city or town Monte Vista state CO zip code 81144

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 Board of Directors of the Public Library of the City of Monte Vista

street & number 120 Jefferson Street telephone (719) 852-3931

city or town Monte Vista state CO zip code 81144

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 7

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO

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## PHOTOGRAPH LOG

This information is the same for all photos listed below:

1. Monte Vista Library
2. Monte Vista, Rio Grande County, Colorado
3. photographer: Byron Syring
4. date: January 1995
5. location of negative: Monte Vista Historical Society

### photo #

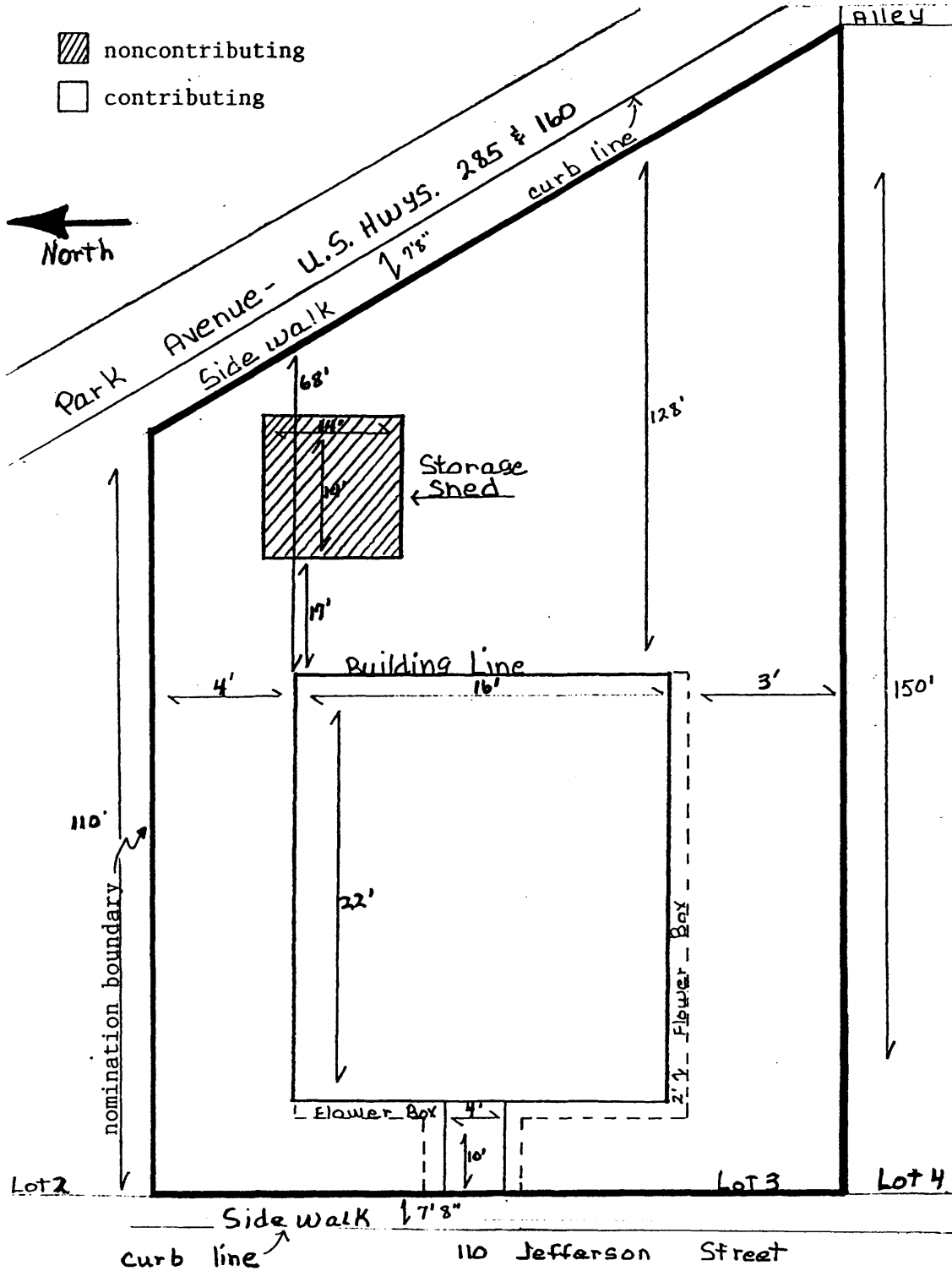
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | front (west) elevation, camera facing east              |
| 2 | north elevation, camera facing southeast                |
| 3 | south elevation & storage shed, camera facing northeast |
| 4 | rear (east) elevation, camera facing west               |
| 5 | interior  |
| 6 | from historic photograph, c.1895                        |

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO



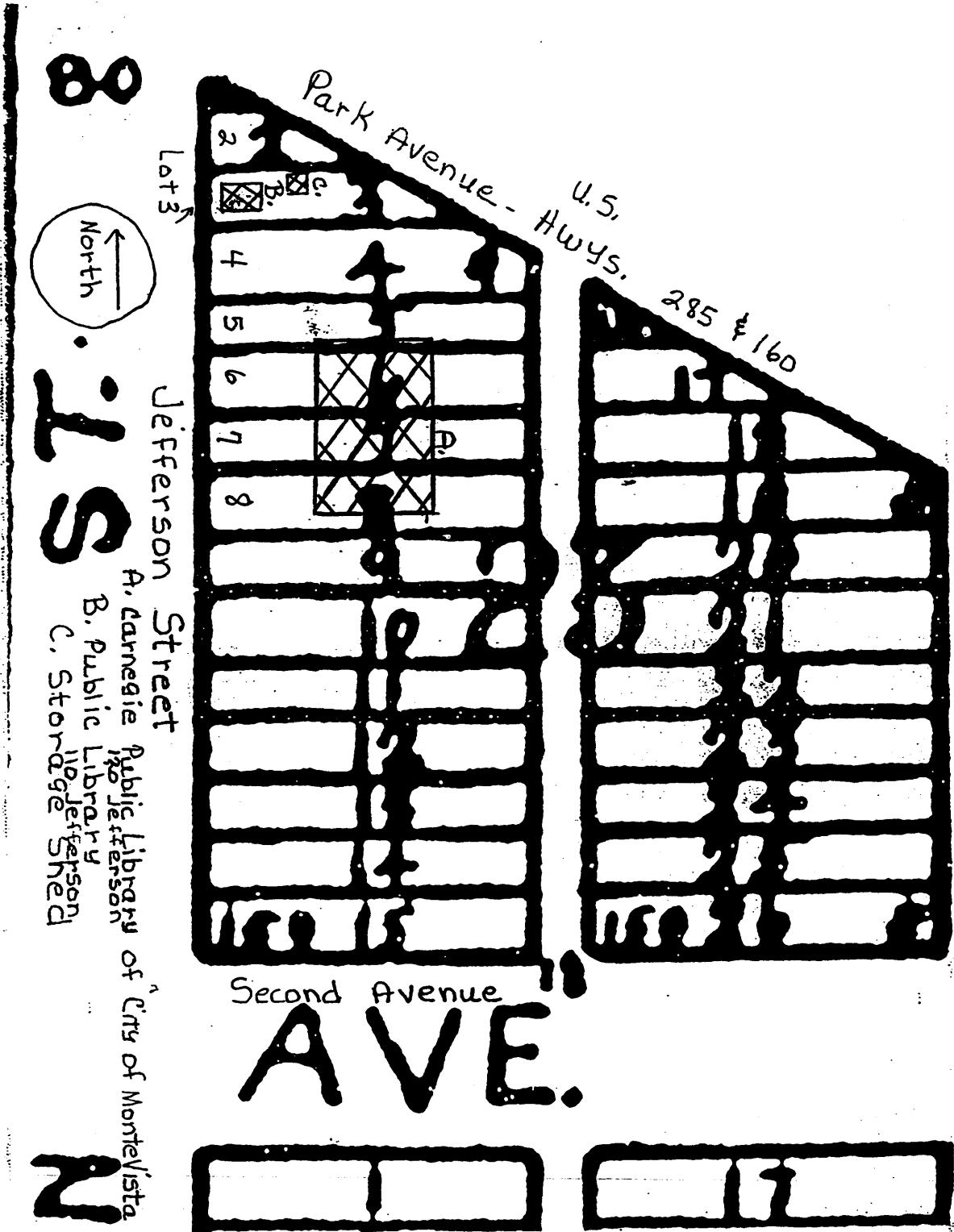
- noncontributing
- contributing

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 9

MONTE VISTA LIBRARY  
RIO GRANDE COUNTY, CO



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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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