

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



828

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. In any 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 for the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Rapid City Masonic Temple

Other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

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

## 2. Location

Street & number 618 Kansas City Street

City or town Rapid City State SD County Pennington

Not for publication       Vicinity

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 as the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_ statewide      x local

Application National Register Criteria x A    \_\_\_ B    x C    \_\_\_ D

<u>Gary D. Vogt</u> Signature of certifying official/Title	<u>09-20-2016</u> Date
<u>SD SHPO</u> State or Federal agency/bureau of Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official	_____ Date
_____ Title	_____ State or Federal agency/bureau of Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

*Jon Edson H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

12-6-16  
Date of Action

**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		buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

Social/Meeting Hall  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Social/Meeting Hall  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

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

Renaissance Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick  
roof Rubber membrane  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Rapid City Masonic Temple is located at 618 Kansas City Street in downtown Rapid City, South Dakota. It is located mid-block on the north side of the street; the building faces south. The rectangular-shaped building has two stories on a raised basement. The foundation is concrete, the exterior walls are brick, the roof is sloped behind a raised parapet edge and is covered with a rubber membrane roofing material. The architectural style of the building is Renaissance Revival.

The original spatial layout is intact, with only minor alterations, as are most of the original finishes. All of the original window openings, some with the original windows, are either intact as openings or can be identified as openings even where they have been infilled or are partially covered. There is a small, one-story concrete block addition on the rear of the building at the northeast corner. Despite alterations, the building retains much of its historic integrity.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### *General Characteristics*

The Rapid City Masonic Temple is a rectangular building measuring 44 feet (from north to south) by 98 feet (from east to west). It has two stories over a raised basement. From the front façade, the upper two stories read as a single story due to the height of the arched windows and the configuration of the end bays. The larger windows correspond with the space of the main Lodge Room, which is two stories in height; both ends of the building have two floors.

#### *Building Structure*

The foundation and basement walls are constructed of concrete. The exterior walls are masonry bearing walls constructed of Bedford Gray brick manufactured locally by the Dark Canyon Stone Company and measure 12½-inches thick. The interior face of the brick walls has two-inch and three-inch wide gypsum block; this block is finished with metal lathe and plaster. The majority of the floors were constructed with 2x8, 2x10, and 2x12 wood joists 16-inches on-center. The joists on the west and east ends of the building span between interior bearing walls; the joists at the middle of the building (the main Lodge Room) span between four 26-inch deep steel I-beams, which span between the north and south exterior concrete foundation walls. The stairs and landings at the southwest corner of the building are steel-reinforced concrete slabs. The roof on the west end is constructed with wood trusses consisting of 2x6 chords and 2x4 webs placed 16-inches on-center. These trusses span from the west exterior masonry wall to an interior bearing wall that separates the west end rooms from the main Lodge Room. The trusses slope from the interior wall to the exterior wall. The roof over the Lodge Room is constructed with 2x8 wood joists, 16-inches on-center, that span between four steel trusses (spanning between the north and south exterior walls) and the interior bearing walls on either end of the Lodge Room. The top chord of the steel trusses slope from south to north. The roof over the east end of the building is constructed of the same type of trusses as those over the west end of the building. Plywood was nailed over the trusses and joists.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> TSP Three, Inc. Observation Report for the Masonic Temple (c. 2014).

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*Exterior Description*

The front (south) elevation consists of five bays; the bays on each end project forward from the wall plane. The three center bays each have one set of windows – those on the upper floor are tall with rounded arches, those on the basement level are smaller and rectangular-shaped and the bottom of the opening sits atop the concrete base wall. Each of these windows has a concrete sill. The original rounded arch windows with steel muntins are intact and are topped with a decorative concrete keystone arch. A minor concrete cornice is located above the three rounded arch windows between the projecting end bays. The bay at the east end of the building has no window at the basement level and one original rectangular window on the upper level, which has a diamond muntin pattern. This window is flanked by concrete fluted pilasters topped with Ionic capitals. Directly above the capitals is a modest cornice that separates the window area from a panel of decorative brick, also in a diamond pattern, located between two simple brick pilasters aligned with those below. The bay at the west end matches that at the east end except that the main entrance to the building is located in this bay. The entrance consists of a double-leaf doorway with concrete surrounds including recessed panels on each side and a broken pediment over the door. The pediment tops an architrave into which is carved “A.F. & A.M.,” which is flanked by small concrete rosettes. In the center of the broken pediment is a shield with the Masonic emblem. Directly over the door itself, on the transom window, the words “Masonic Center” are painted. The original wooden doors with multiple lights and original hardware are intact but have been retrofitted with new security crash bars. In the upper part of the bay is a diamond-paned window that matches that in the east bay. There is a wide set of concrete stairs from the sidewalk to the entrance landing; metal lampposts are located on each side of the landing. The cornerstone, carved into black granite, is located in the southeast corner of the building with sides visible on each elevation. The south side of the stone reads “AL 5925 AD1925 JUNE FIFTH MASONIC TEMPLE M.W. GRAND MASTER FREDERICK TREON.” The traditional Masonic symbol of the compass and ruler is carved into the east side of the stone block.

The concrete foundation walls extend above the ground on the south, east and west sides of the building creating the image of a solid base to the building. The brickwork of the lower third of the exterior walls, also on the south, east and west sides, is laid with a slightly recessed row of bricks every seventh row, which gives the appearance of a horizontal rustication. Directly above this portion of the wall is a concrete beltcourse on the three sides of the building and which wraps just around the corners on the rear elevation before stopping. The upper portions of the walls on the south, east and west sides of the building are a flat brick surface, except where the brick is built out as projecting bays and pilasters. A concrete cornice detailed with dentils also wraps around the front and two sides of the building. Coping tops the parapet walls on all sides of the building.

The west end of the building includes three small windows that correspond with the stairwell in the southwest corner of the building. The opening on the second floor has been bricked in but the original sill is in place and the original opening visible. The other two windows are original, diamond-paned wood windows with exterior storm windows. In addition to these stairwell windows, at the basement level, are three small vinyl slider windows placed at the upper part of the original window openings; the lower part of each opening has been bricked in, but the original sills are intact. Above these are three rectangular-shaped windows on the first floor and four on the second floor. One of the windows on the second floor has also been bricked in, but the original sill is intact and the original opening visible. Also on the west end of the building, centered on the parapet wall, is the traditional Masonic emblem.

The east end of the building includes a doorway at the basement level that leads into the kitchen. There were originally four window openings on each floor of the building. Two of the basement level windows have been infilled with brick; the other two have been retrofitted with smaller vinyl windows and the openings partially filled in. On the first floor, two of the four have been infilled with brick, while the other two have been partially infilled and retrofitted with different windows. All four of the second floor windows have been bricked in; one of them has a small vent installed at the top of one of the original openings. In all cases, the original openings are still visible and the original sills are in place as they were historically. When the building was constructed, there was substantial open space between the east end of the building and the nearest neighbor, the Public Library,

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to the east. After the construction of the Temple, the library was extended to the west (in the 1930s) and in the 1950s, a three-story building (since demolished) was constructed between the library and the Masonic Temple. It is assumed that it was at this time that the east windows were infilled to prevent anyone in the three-story building from being able to see directly into the private space on the first and second floors of the Masonic Temple. The windows at that level corresponded with dressing rooms for ceremonies and ceremonial storage, and privacy was essential.

The rear (north) side of the building is clearly a secondary elevation not intended to be viewed by the general public. The basement level walls are simply concrete; the upper walls are brick, but a less expensive brick than the other three elevations. This brick, which is slightly lighter in color than the Bedford Gray, is laid with occasional horizontal rows of a darker brick. There is no beltcourse or cornice on this elevation. Located at the east corner of the building is a small, one-story concrete block addition (constructed in 1955); it sits atop the original coal storage room. A metal security door provides access from the north into the addition. The roof of the addition is flat; the fire escape from the first floor of the building crosses the roof to access a metal stair on the west end of the addition. A brick chimney is visible at the northeast corner of the roof. The windows on this elevation are perhaps the most changed in the building, although all the original openings are still obvious and the original sills in place. At the basement level, two windows (one in the small addition) have been bricked in, while four windows have been partially infilled and retrofitted with newer vinyl slider windows. Four large rounded arch windows, which correspond with the main Lodge Room, have been bricked in. Two additional windows on this elevation at the west end are smaller; the second floor window has been bricked in and the first floor window partially infilled and retrofitted with a newer window.

*Interior Description*

The interior spatial arrangement and layout of the Masonic Temple remains largely the same as when it was constructed. The main entry opens into a small vestibule; to the left is the stairwell to the upper levels, to the right is the basement down a short flight of steps. The original flooring in the lobby was cork tile, as were the steps; both are now covered with carpeting. The decorative metal grille railing on the stairs is original. An elevator, installed in 2000 in what was originally a secondary stairwell, can be accessed through an entry at this level.

The basement includes a banquet hall measuring 41 feet by 64 feet. The original maple floor is intact. The walls are painted plaster; the ceiling is covered with an acoustic tile. An original light fixture is located in the center of the room; other fixtures appear to be more recent. At the northeast corner of the large room is a doorway providing access to the concrete block addition; a second entry into the addition is through the kitchen. The heating system for the building is located in the addition (the original Kewanee boiler has been replaced with modern equipment). At the east end of the basement is a large, commercial-grade kitchen. This space originally included a kitchen on the south end and the boiler room on the north end. Sometime after the addition was constructed and the original boiler removed, this space was opened into one large kitchen. At the west end of the basement are three rooms – a men's restroom (originally called the men's smoking room), a women's restroom, and a storage room. The elevator is accessed in the southwest corner of the large room.

At the top of the first flight of stairs is the landing to the first floor, which is accessed through a set of original double-leaf doors with the original hardware. The first room is the reception room. This room has oak floors (currently covered with carpeting) and walnut trimwork. A large stone fireplace, constructed of native Black Hills stones, is located on the east wall of this room. At the north end of the room, a set of double doors leads into a room at the northwest corner of the building. Hallways from both of these rooms lead to the main Lodge Room. Situated between these rooms and the Lodge Room are cloak rooms, currently used in part for storage. The elevator access on this floor is along the south side of the south hallway. Near the elevator is the doorway leading to the storage room beneath the south balcony (commonly referred to as "the tunnel").



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The main Lodge Room measures 35 feet by 75 feet. The walls are painted plaster; the original cork flooring has been covered with carpet. The ceiling appears to be a combination of plaster (original) and sheetrock (installed later with heating ducts were installed). Originally there was an oval depression in the ceiling that the original floorplans indicate was designed to improve acoustics in the room. No records were found that indicate when this was covered over, but an impression of the oval is still visible. A stage measuring 8 feet by 18 feet is located at the east end of the room. The stage includes a fly tower that stretches to the upper floor and footlights installed in the stage floor. The opening to the stage is surrounded by a simple semi-round arch; the stage is three steps above the main floor level. Curtains hang at each side and above the stage. A balcony is located along the south and west sides of the room. The original decorative metal grille railing and original woodwork is intact. A staircase from the main floor to the balcony is located along the north wall. Situated along the upper walls is a decorative plaster cornice behind which lighting is located. The original windows on the south side are intact but have been covered; the windows on the north side have been bricked in although the openings are intact. Heavy curtains hang over the openings. Beyond the east end of the room are storage/dressing rooms and a small office.

The second floor exists only on the east end and west ends of the building (the main Lodge Room on the first floor extends into what would be the second floor in the center of the building). The west end second floor is accessed by the stairs at the southwest corner of the building. This level includes two rooms, one originally used as a room for billiards and cards and the other as a library, that are now used primarily for storage and a small meeting room. Although the original flooring in these rooms has been carpeted over, the original plaster walls and ceilings are intact, as is the original wood trimwork, including a walnut telephone nook in the small meeting room. The east end of the second floor is accessed via a spiral metal staircase from the office on the first floor. This space was originally used as a music room, dressing rooms, and storage space, but has since served various purposes, although still largely used for storage.

### *Landscaping*

The building was intentionally set twenty feet back from the public right-of-way to allow for landscaping and planting of trees. Shortly after the dedication of the building, trees were planted between the sidewalk and the street; these trees have since been removed. Small shrubs flank the entry and a grassy lawn is located along the south side of the building. A modern sign with the Masonic emblem has been installed in front of the building near the east end. A wooden fence and an evergreen tree are located on the west side of the building. The area around the building on the east and north sides has been paved for parking.

### *Alterations*

Alterations to the building have been minimal, perhaps with the exception of the windows, and have simply served to keep the space usable through the years. The only structural addition is the 1955 one-story concrete block structure built to house new heating equipment; the addition was located over the original coal storage room. The acoustic oval in the Lodge Room has been covered over, but appears to remain intact beneath the new ceiling. The installation of the elevator in 2000 was thoughtfully placed in a space rarely used and has provided access to the multi-level space for members and guests who can no longer manage stairs. The kitchen was upgraded with new appliances and hood filters in 2008. An electrical upgrade occurred in 2010 and the new roofing was installed in 2012. Most other alterations, such as the installation of carpeting (the original floors are intact beneath the carpet), are mostly cosmetic.

Although many of the windows have been altered, most of the original openings are either intact (those with partial in-fills) or obvious due to the intact sills and the use of a different color brick to infill. Some of the windows that have been covered over are still in place behind the coverings. All these alterations are reversible and the windows could be restored to the original types.

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*Conclusion*

The Rapid City Masonic Temple is generally in good condition, although there are some maintenance issues that will need to be addressed in the future. It retains a high degree of historic integrity and should be considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1925-1966  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation** (if applicable)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

James C. Ewing, Sr., architect  
Stubstad & Olson, builders  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Rapid City Masonic Temple is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significance to the community in the area of Social History. The Masonic Temple has served as headquarters for the Rapid City Masonic Lodge #25 A.F. & A.M. since its construction and represents the fraternal organization's long history in and contributions to Rapid City.

It is also being nominated under Criterion C as a rare example of Renaissance Revival architecture in Rapid City. It is the oldest known example of a building designed by architect James C. Ewing, Sr. He made significant contributions to the architecture of Rapid City between 1925 and the 1960s when he retired, and was for over twenty years the only architect practicing in Rapid City.

The period of significance begins in 1925, the year the building was constructed, and ends with 1966, the standard 50-year mark recommended by the National Register. The building is considered significant on a local level.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

*A Brief History of Rapid City and the Beginnings of Masonic Lodge #25 A.F. & A.M.*

Prior to the discovery of gold in 1874 in the Black Hills, the area where Rapid City is located was occupied by Native American tribes. The prospect of gold brought a rush of Euro-American settlers to the Black Hills area and before long, new towns sprung up. In February of 1876, a small group of men led by John Brennan and Samuel Scott set out to establish a new town site near the foothills in an area with agricultural potential. After exploring Rapid Creek from their campsite near what is now known as Cleghorn Springs to the Cheyenne River, they determined that the town should be located approximately three miles east of their campsite. They laid out the town site, one mile square with six blocks in the center designated as a business district, on the south side of Rapid Creek. One of the men in their party, William J. Martin, proposed naming the town Rapid City, which was agreed upon.<sup>2</sup>

The town grew steadily and by August of 1876, the population was over one hundred.<sup>3</sup> During its early days, the town was a stopping area for ox and mule trains headed to the mining camps in the Black Hills with supplies. The area was referred to the "Hay Camp," a name it retained until after the railroad, which arrived in 1886, replaced the ox and mule trains and the hay camp grew into a city.<sup>4</sup>

In May of 1881, a group of men in Rapid City met to discuss the possibility of forming a Masonic Lodge in Rapid City. On August 1 of that year, Most Worshipful Brother Thomas H. Brown, Grand Master of the Masons of Dakota Territory, granted dispensation to John F. Schrader, James Jacoby, N.C. Whitfield, A.C. Boland, F.J. Hicks, Chancey L. Wood, Felix Paznansky, and Eli Fenestermaker to organize a lodge in Rapid City. The first organizing meeting was held on September 2, 1881 on the second floor of Lee Cow's Chinese laundry building on Main Street. Officers were elected as follows: John F. Schrader, Worshipful Master; James Jacoby, Senior Warden; N.C. Whitfield, Junior Warden; Felix Poznansky, Treasurer; Chancey L. Wood, Secretary; A.C.

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<sup>2</sup> David F. Strain, *Black Hills Hay Camp*. Rapid City, SD: Dakota West Books & Fenske Printing, Inc., 1989), 1-5.

<sup>3</sup> "History," *Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce* website ([www.rapidcitychamber.com/relocation-info/history](http://www.rapidcitychamber.com/relocation-info/history)), accessed March 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Strain, 10-11.

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Boland, Senior Deacon; Eli Fenstermaker, Junior Deacon; and F.J. Hicks, Tyler. On June 15, 1882, the Grand Lodge of Dakota Territory granted a charter to Rapid City Lodge #25 A.F. & A.M.<sup>5</sup>

*A Brief History of Freemasonry*

Although it is not known with certainty when the Masonic fraternity (also known as Freemasonry) was formed, a widely accepted theory points to its beginning in the Middle Ages with the stonemasons' guilds. In the early 1700s, lodges were established in England and within thirty years, the fraternity had spread throughout Europe and to the American colonies. Freemasonry was popular in colonial America – George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, John Hancock, and others involved in the founding of the country were Masons.

During the 1800s and early 1900s, Freemasonry grew in popularity and the number of members grew dramatically. The fraternity emphasized personal self-improvement and social betterment through involvement and philanthropy. It was one of the organizations most responsible for spreading the "ideals of Enlightenment: the dignity of man and the liberty of the individual, the right of all persons to worship as they choose, the formation of democratic governments, and the importance of public education."<sup>6</sup> Over the years, the Masons were actively involved supporting public schools, founding orphanages, creating homes for widows and the aged, and helping their communities. Today, the Masonic fraternity continues this tradition by operating children's hospitals, funding medical research, providing care to Masons and their families at Masonic Homes, and contributing to local communities through a variety of service.

In South Dakota, several Masons were among the earliest settlers. Discussions of organizing a lodge began in 1862; dispensation was granted and the first lodge chartered on June 3, 1863. The lodge, located in Yankton, was called St. John's No. 166 and it operated under the jurisdiction of Iowa (the genealogy of Dakota Masonry is as follows: England to North Carolina, to Tennessee, to Missouri, to Iowa, to Dakota Territory). The second lodge to be organized was Incense No. 257 in Vermillion on February 10, 1869. Lodges at Elk Point (April 16, 1870), Canton (June 3, 1870), and Sioux Falls (June 10, 1870) soon followed. Delegates from these five lodges met to organize a Grand Lodge for Dakota Territory in June 1875; on July 21, 1875, the Grand Lodge of Dakota was instituted at Vermillion. By 1904, there were one hundred Masonic lodges in South Dakota with a membership of more than 5,400.<sup>7</sup>

A number of related organizations stem from Freemasonry. These are usually referred to as Masonic appendant bodies. In South Dakota there were a number of appendant bodies including the York Rites (established in 1885), the Grand Commandry (established in 1880), the Scottish Rite (established in 1882), and the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (established 1888). The women's organization, the Order of the Eastern Star, was established in 1890. Appendant bodies also included youth groups known as DeMolay International (the first national group for boys was organized in 1919; the date of its introduction in South Dakota is c.1920s), and Jobs Daughters (the organization was founded for girls in 1920; the date of its introduction in South Dakota is c.1920s).<sup>8</sup> It was typical for each of these organizations to use the local Masonic buildings for their meetings.

In Rapid City, as mentioned in the previous section, the Masonic Lodge #25 A.F. & A.M. was organized in 1881 and officially chartered the following year. They met at Lee Cow's building until 1885, when they moved to new quarters in the Flormann Building on St. Joseph St. They built their current building in 1925 and have

<sup>5</sup> John P. Hayes, "History of Masonry in Rapid City," speech delivered to Lodge #25, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> "History of Freemasonry," *Masonic Service Association of North America* website ([www.msana.com/historyfm.asp](http://www.msana.com/historyfm.asp)), accessed March 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Doane Robinson, *History of South Dakota*, Vol. 1 (Logansport, IN: B.F. Bowen, 1904), Chapter LXXXIX (no pages).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

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been headquartered at this site since its dedication in 1926. A number of appendant groups are associated with this Masonic Lodge including the York Rite Royal Arch Masons, the Scottish Rite, the Schrader Commandry, No. 9 of the Knights Templar (organized in 1886), the Rapid City Shrine Club, the Order of the Eastern Star (organized in 1892), the Order of DeMolay, and Jobs Daughters. All of these groups have used the Rapid City Masonic Temple for their meetings through the years.

*The Contributions of the Local Masons to the City*

The Rapid City Masons have a long history of active involvement and contribution to the community and its citizens. Soon after they were granted their official charter, they established a presence in the city and participated in several activities. Their involvement has included the laying of cornerstones at notable civic buildings including the 1882 Rapid City High School, the 1885 cornerstone for the first South Dakota School of Mines building, the 1913 Federal building, the 1921 Methodist Deaconess Hospital, the 1922 Pennington County Courthouse, the 1925 Masonic Temple, the 1930 City Auditorium, and the 1978 Rapid City Shrine Club. They have provided financial assistance for Masons and their families in times of need. They have made contributions to several organizations providing services to children. They have helped at times of community crises, such as the clean-up following the Rapid City flood in 1972.<sup>9</sup> Masonic lodges also contributed to the community in less tangible ways; they played a role in gendered socialization, the building of business relationships, and expressions of community status.

On May 19, 1942 it was announced that the Masonic Temple would serve as a Masonic Service Center. The Masonic Service Association of North America (MSA) was formed in 1919 to serve Masons in the military. During World War II, the MSA operated Masonic Service Centers near major military facilities, supported by voluntary funds from local Masonic organizations. Following the war, assistance continued for veterans. Among the services provided in Rapid City were the hosting of holiday dinners, hosting of programs and lectures, and an "Adopt A Soldier" program to provide servicemen with gifts at Christmas. In addition to events, the Service Center, which was located in the basement of the Masonic Temple, was set up as a recreational space with ping pong and pool tables.<sup>10</sup>

In July of 1951, several Master Masons stationed at Ellsworth Air Force Base petitioned to establish a Masonic Lodge at the airbase. The initial request was not granted, but in May 1952, the Rapid City Lodge #25 sponsored another attempt. At the meeting of the Grand Lodge in Watertown in June of 1952, the new lodge was granted a dispensation to organize under the sponsorship of Rapid City Lodge #25. The first meeting of the new lodge, which is known as the Mt. Rushmore Lodge #220, was held on July 25, 1952.<sup>11</sup> This lodge also meets at the Rapid City Masonic Temple.

More recently the Masons in Rapid City have been actively involved in several events and activities including the South Dakota Child Identification program, the Model Student Assistance Program, annual city clean up projects, continued contributions to various organizations and associations, provision of personal financial assistance to needy members of the community, continued participation in the Masonic Service Association through visitation to veterans at VA Center Hospitals in the area, continued participation in various educational activities for local students, and participation in local parades. Although the membership numbers have dwindled over the years, the Masons continued to be a vital part of the local community.

<sup>9</sup> Minutes of Masonic Lodge #25 meetings.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "Mt. Rushmore Lodge 220" website ([www.mtrushmorelodge220.org/about\\_us.htm](http://www.mtrushmorelodge220.org/about_us.htm)), accessed March 2016.

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*The Rapid City Masonic Temple: Its Architecture, Its Construction, and Its Architect*

As Masonic Lodges became established, they often met in locations suitable for group meetings, sometimes in rooms over commercial businesses, as in Rapid City's earliest meeting spaces in Lee Cow's building and the Flormann Building. With time, many lodges raised funds to construct their own buildings. Originally called Masonic Halls, these buildings became known as Masonic Temples by the 1920s as larger and more elaborate buildings were constructed in several cities throughout the country. By the time the Rapid City Masonic Lodge #25 constructed its own building, the commonly used term was "temple."

The Rapid City Masonic Lodge #25 began discussing the construction of its own building as early as 1910, when a committee was appointed to find a site for and the costs of a Masonic Temple. Initially a site at the corner of St. Joseph and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets was purchased and plans made for an elaborate new building. Those plans never came to fruition, so in 1923 discussion began anew and a new committee was appointed in 1924. A new site consisting of five lots west of the library on Kansas City Street was purchased and J.C. Ewing, a local architect, was hired to design the building. The architectural drawings were accepted by the lodge on February 23, 1925 and plans were made to proceed.<sup>12</sup>

In May 1925, the contract for construction was given to Stubstad & Olson, a local construction company.<sup>13</sup> Construction began in June and the cornerstone was laid by the Masons on June 5, 1925. Other contractors, builders, and material suppliers on the project included Rapid Plumbing Company (heating and plumbing work); Dakota Plaster Company (interior walls); Dark Canyon Stone Company (furnished the brick); Rapid City Lumber & Machinery Company (furnished the millwork); and Sweeney Hardware (furnished the roof, the sheet metal, hardware and the kitchen ranges). M.E. Nystrom, of Custer, built the "Specimen Masonry" fireplace with specimen stones from the Black Hills.<sup>14</sup>

Most of the construction was completed by early 1926; only finishing touches were left to complete. The official dedication for the building was a week-long event with dignitaries from several other Masonic Lodges and officers of the Grand Lodge of South Dakota participating. The events began on Tuesday, April 27 and continued through Saturday, May 1 and included several speakers, dinners, dances, and a parade. In addition to events sponsored by the Masonic Lodge #25, events were also coordinated by the Order of the Eastern Star, the Schrader Commandry, the Shrine, and DeMolay.<sup>15</sup>

Architecturally, the Rapid City Masonic Temple is a good example of Renaissance Revival architecture in Rapid City. Renaissance Revival (sometimes called Neo-Renaissance) encompasses a combination of revival styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that drew inspiration largely from Italian roots. Typical features of the style include rounded arches, roof balustrades or parapets, classical door surrounds with pedimented (sometimes broken pediments) arches, small classical columns or pilasters, belt courses, and rusticated ground or first floors. Exterior walls are clad with stone or brick.

The Rapid City Masonic Temple exemplifies the style in its use of brick exterior cladding, a rusticated ground floor separated from the upper levels by a belt course, a parapeted roof edge, rounded arch windows on the main levels, classic door surrounds with a broken pedimented arch, and small classical pilasters with Ionic capitals. The style suits the importance of the building's place in the community. Although there have been some changes to the building over the years, including the covering over or bricking in of windows, it retains sufficient integrity to illustrate the Renaissance Revival style. Only one other example of Renaissance Revival

<sup>12</sup> Minutes of Masonic Lodge #25 meetings.

<sup>13</sup> "Local Firm Gets Work of Building," *Black Hills Weekly Journal*, May 22, 1925.

<sup>14</sup> "Special Edition, Masonic Temple Dedication," *Rapid City Journal*, April 23, 1926.

<sup>15</sup> "Plans Completed for Masonic Week," *Black Hills Weekly Journal*, April 16, 1926.

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architecture in Rapid City is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; that building is the 1914 First Congregational Church (listed 1984).

The architect of the building was James Carl (J.C.) Ewing, Sr. He was born on May 16, 1887 in Fontanelle, Iowa. He received his architectural education from the Chicago Institute in Chicago and Georgia Tech in Atlanta. He served as a border guard in with the Arizona National Guard and during World War I as a pilot instructor with the Army Signal Corps. On October 28, 1919 he married Mary Eddy in Fontanelle.<sup>16</sup>

He worked for the architectural firm of Hulse & Company in Des Moines, Iowa following the war and in 1920, moved to Rapid City to serve as the 'resident architect' for the Hulse firm, which designed the Pennington County Courthouse. He apparently found Rapid City to his liking; following the completion of the courthouse in 1922, he stayed in town and opened his own architectural firm. He practiced independently until 1944 when he and Adrian Forrette formed a partnership and operated under the name of Ewing & Forrette until the 1960s. His son, James C. Ewing, Jr., joined the Ewing and Forrette firm in the late 1950s and worked with them until establishing his own private practice in 1964. Ewing (Sr.) retired in 1969. In addition to his architectural career, he was actively involved in the community and served as a one-term city councilor. He was a member of the First United Methodist Church, the Elks Lodge, the Masonic Lodge, the Naja Shrine, the Rotary Club, and the American Legion. He died January 15, 1984 at the age of 96.<sup>17</sup>

Ewing was responsible for the design of several buildings in Rapid City. In addition to the Masonic Temple were the Rapid City Laundry building (1928, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995), the Motor Services Company building (1929, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995), the Gymnasium at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (1929), the City Auditorium (1930, demolished in the 1970s), the Jefferson School building (1930), the Pennington County Fairgrounds Administration Building (1933, demolished), the O'Harra Memorial Building at South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (1942, extant), and the addition to the hospital (1943). References in the nominations for the two buildings listed here also mention that he designed the "Riss" building, but no record of a Riss building in Rapid City was found. It is believed that this reference was to the Rise Building (1927, extant), where Ewing had his office on the second floor for a number of years.

After teaming up with Forrette, Ewing was responsible for designs for the Gambles Store (1947), the Rapid City Municipal Building (1955), the west wing addition to the Sioux Indian Museum (1957), and the Mount Rushmore Concession Building (c.1960).

### *Comparative Analysis*

The Masons were leaders in South Dakota in constructing architect-designed buildings of various architectural styles. Several examples are listed on the National Register of Historic Places including the Aberdeen Masonic Temple (1899, Romanesque Revival), the Yankton Scottish Rite Masonic Center (1903, Chateausque and Richardsonian Romanesque), the Madison Masonic Temple (1907, Classical Revival), the Flandreau Masonic Temple (1916, Colonial Revival), the Mobridge Masonic Temple (1923, Egyptian Revival), and the Parker Masonic Temple (1925, Renaissance Revival). The fact that Rapid City's Masonic Lodge chose to employ a local architect to design the Renaissance Revival style building appears to have followed a tradition that was well-established in South Dakota.

It was not only the Masons, however, that built fraternal halls. In Rapid City, early fraternal organizations included the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE), the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF),

<sup>16</sup> James C. Ewing obituary, *Rapid City Journal*, January 17, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

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the Knights of Pythias, the Knights of Columbus, and the Loyal Order of Moose. Most early groups met in shared buildings, such as the Flormann Building or Lewis Hall, in downtown Rapid City. Some of the organizations eventually built their own lodge buildings, although there is only one other intact historic lodge hall in the city. This building is the Elks Building, built in 1911-1912; it was designed by J.P. Eisentraut in the Mission style. The BPOE built a new meeting hall in the 1960s; the old building currently houses commercial space on the ground floor, professional offices on the upper floor, and the Elks Theater at the south end of the building. The IOOF also built a meeting hall near downtown, but that building has been substantially altered and retains no historic integrity. Only the Rapid City Masonic Temple continues to be used as originally intended; it retains integrity to its historic function and architecture and continues to serve the Rapid City Masons today.

*Conclusion*

The Rapid City Masonic Temple is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its important associations with the community's social history and the significance of the Masonic Lodge #25 in Rapid City. It is also eligible for listing under Criterion C as a good, but rare, example of Renaissance Revival architecture in Rapid City and as the oldest known surviving design by James C. Ewing, Sr. in Rapid City.

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

#### PRINTED SOURCES

Ewing, James C. Obituary, *Rapid City Journal*, January 17, 1984.

Hayes, John P. "History of Masonry in Rapid City," speech delivered to Lodge #25, 1936.

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Minutes of Masonic Lodge #25 meetings. Collection of A.F.A.M. Lodge #25, Rapid City, South Dakota.

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Strain, David F. *Black Hills Hay Camp*. Rapid City, SD: Dakota West Books & Fenske Printing, Inc., 1989.

#### INTERNET SOURCES

"History," *Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce* website ([www.rapidcitychamber.com/relocation-info/history](http://www.rapidcitychamber.com/relocation-info/history)), accessed March 2016.

"History of Freemasonry," *Masonic Service Association of North America* website ([www.msana.com/historyfm.asp](http://www.msana.com/historyfm.asp)), accessed March 2016.

"Mt. Rushmore Lodge 220" website ([www.mtrushmorelodge220.org/about\\_us.htm](http://www.mtrushmorelodge220.org/about_us.htm)), accessed March 2016.

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#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary determination of individual listing
- Previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- Designated a National Historic Landmark
- Recorded by Historic American Building Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- Recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_



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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** less than one

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates** (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude 44.079462  
Longitude -103.228560

3. Latitude \_\_\_\_\_  
Longitude \_\_\_\_\_

2. Latitude \_\_\_\_\_  
Longitude \_\_\_\_\_

4. Latitude \_\_\_\_\_  
Longitude \_\_\_\_\_

Or

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):  NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone 13 Easting 641834.70 Northing 4882224.10

2. Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Easting \_\_\_\_\_ Northing \_\_\_\_\_

3. Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Easting \_\_\_\_\_ Northing \_\_\_\_\_

4. Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Easting \_\_\_\_\_ Northing \_\_\_\_\_

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary for this property includes all of Lots 22-26 of Block 94 of the Original Town of Rapid City (tax ID #0053311), the parcel on which the Masonic Temple is located.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the entirety of the property owned by the Masonic Lodge #25, as it was historically and is today.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title Michelle L. Dennis  
Organization M.L. Dennis Consulting  
Street & number 513 Meade St.  
City or town Rapid City State SD Zip code 57701  
E-mail michdenn@msn.com Telephone 605-342-8286  
Date April 2016

**Additional Documentation** (Submit the following items with the completed form)

- Maps: A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- Sketch map for historic district and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Additional items: Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Rapid City Masonic Temple  
**City or Vicinity:** Rapid City  
**County:** Pennington **State:** South Dakota  
**Photographer:** Michelle L. Dennis  
**Date Photographed:** August/November 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 16: Front (south) elevation (camera facing north)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0001)

Photo 2 of 16: East elevation (camera facing west) (SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0002)

Photo 3 of 16: Rear (north) elevation (camera facing south)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0003)

Photo 4 of 16: West elevation (camera facing southeast) (SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0004)

Photo 5 of 16: Front entrance in west end bay (camera facing north)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0005)

Photo 6 of 16: Main lodge room on first floor, facing stage (camera facing east/southeast)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0006)

Photo 7 of 17: Main lodge room on first floor, opposite of stage (camera facing west)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0007)

Photo 8 of 16: Stage in main lodge room, first floor (camera facing east)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0008)

Photo 9 of 16: Detail of ornamental plaster, lighting fixtures tucked behind the top (camera facing southeast)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0009)

Photo 10 of 16: Reception room, first floor, with Black Hills specimen stone fireplace (camera facing east)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0010)

Photo 11 of 16: Meeting room, first floor, off the reception room (camera facing north)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0011)

Photo 12 of 16: Meeting room, northwest corner of second floor (camera facing north)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0012)

Photo 13 of 16: Walnut phone nook in second floor meeting room (camera facing east)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0013)

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Photo 14 of 16: Banquet hall in basement (camera facing southeast)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0014)

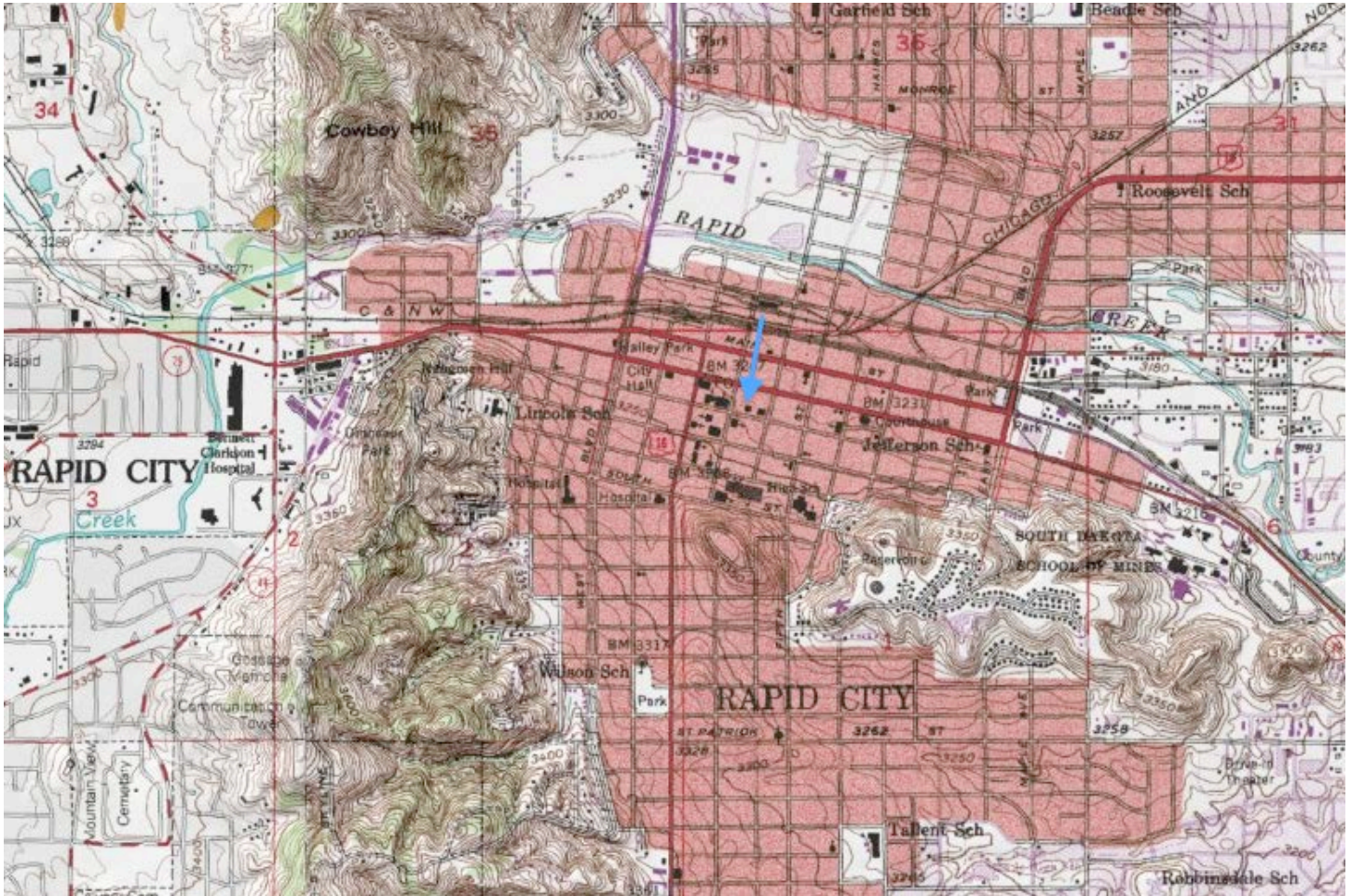
Photo 15 of 16: Stairwell, southwest corner of building (camera facing southwest)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0015)

Photo 16 of 16: Cornerstone of building (camera facing northwest)  
(SD\_PenningtonCounty\_RapidCityMasonicTemple\_0016)

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**USGS Topo of Rapid City:** Blue arrow pointing to Masonic Temple

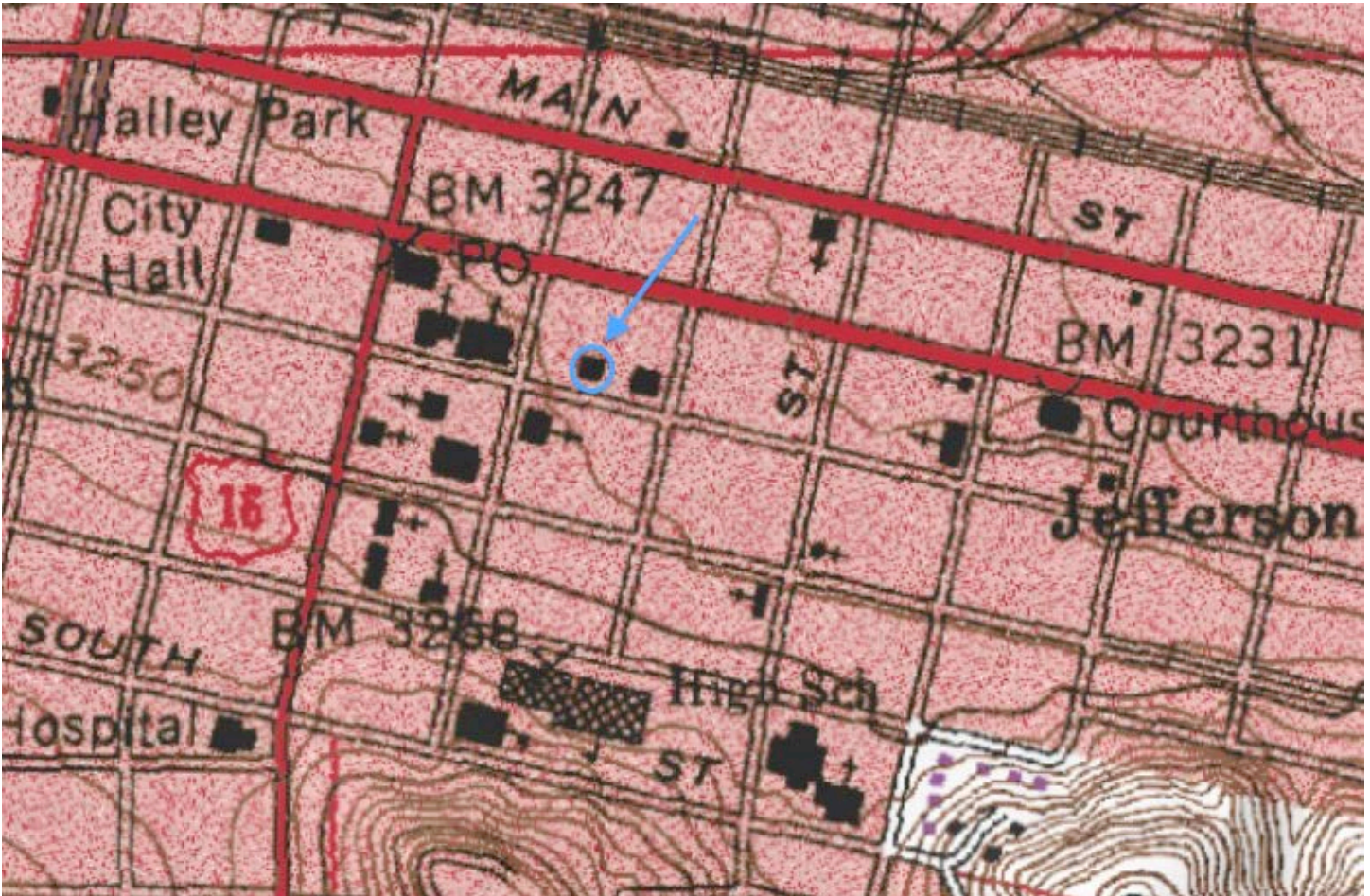




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**USGS Topo Close-Up:** Masonic Temple circled in blue

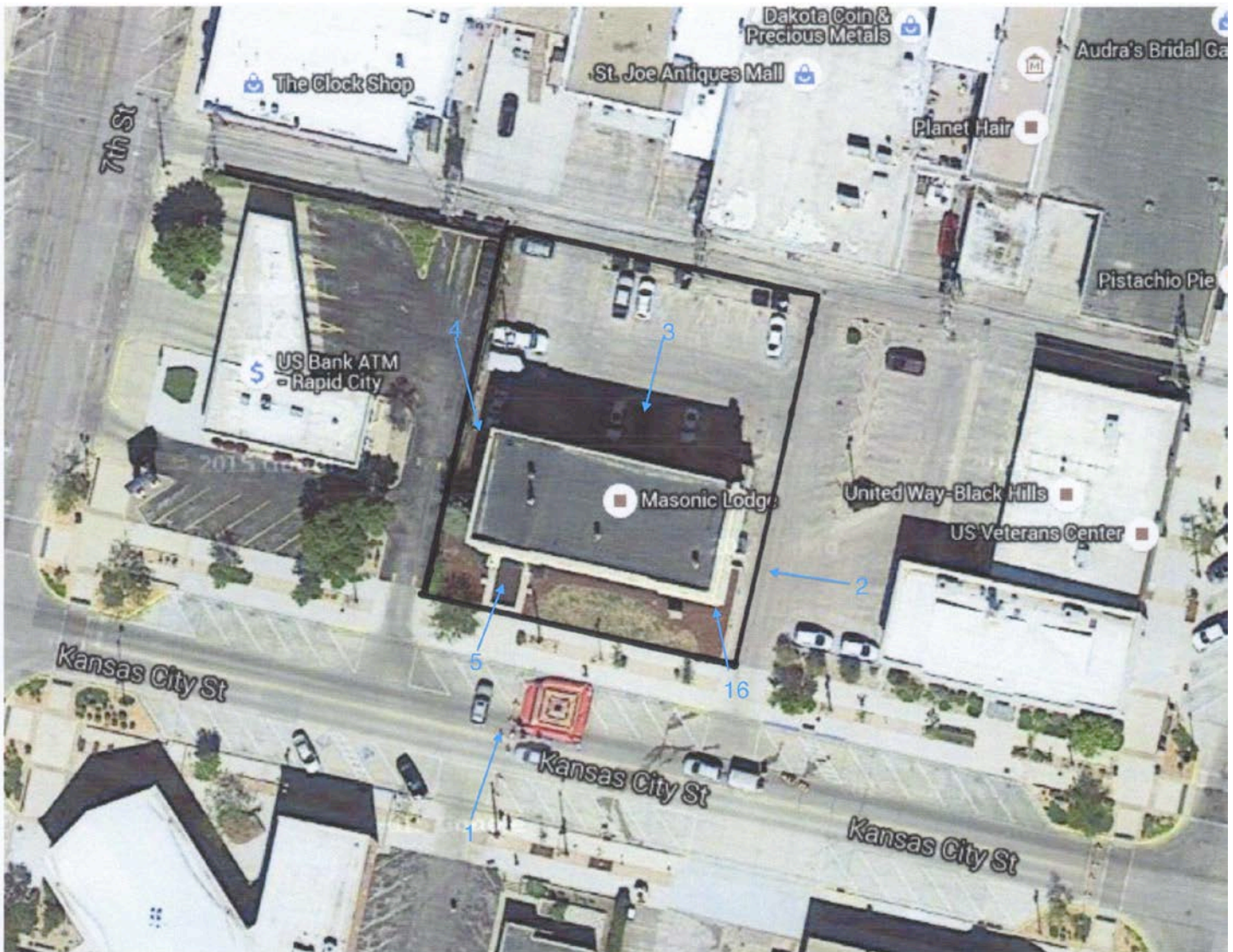




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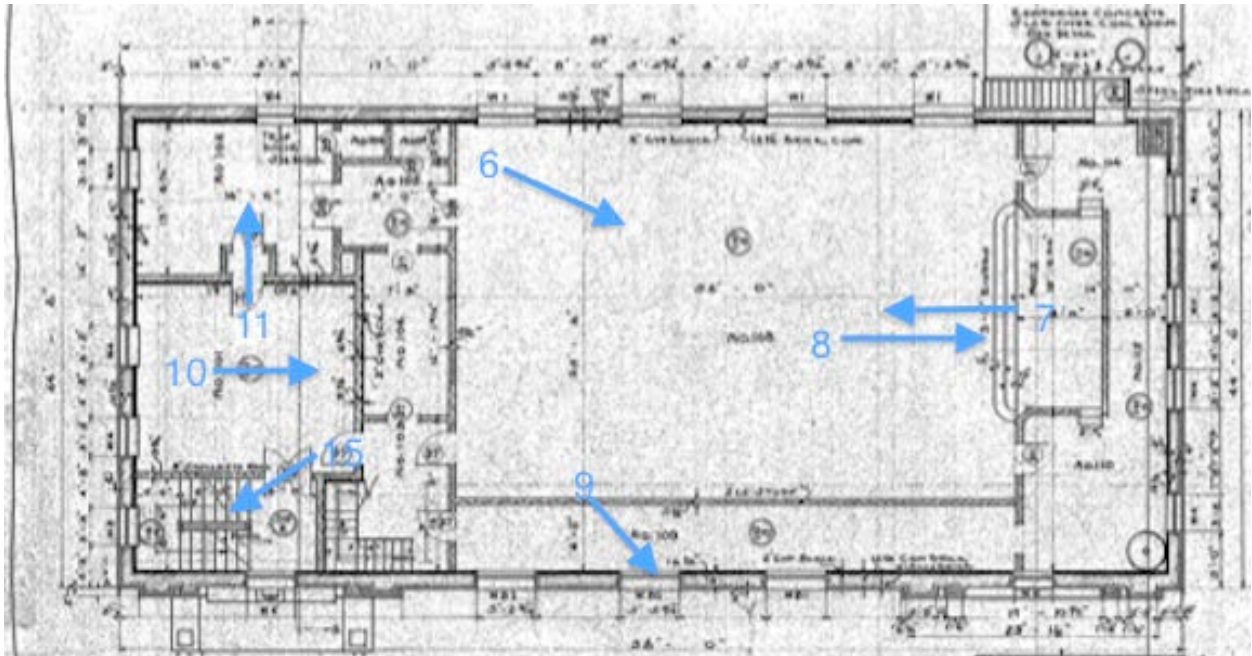
Site Plan – nominated property outlined in black; number key to photographs (in blue)



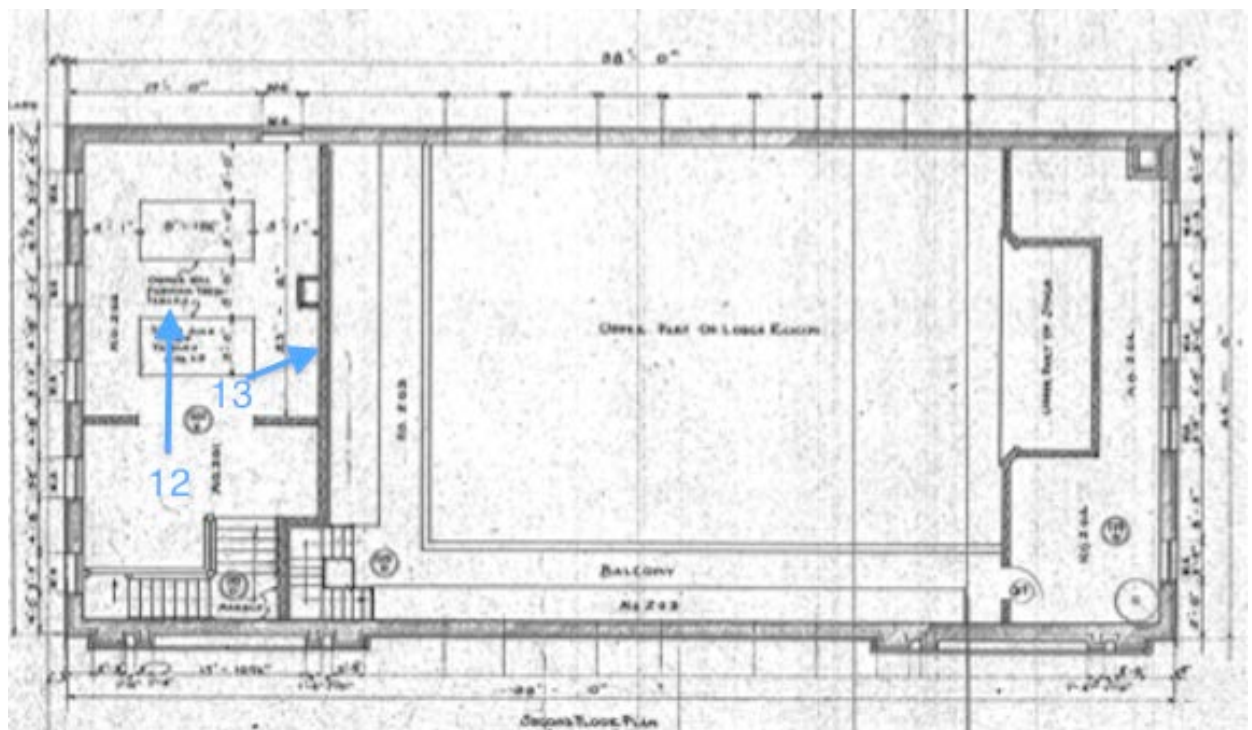
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Plan for first floor, number key to photographs (in blue)



Plan for second floor, number key to photographs (in blue)

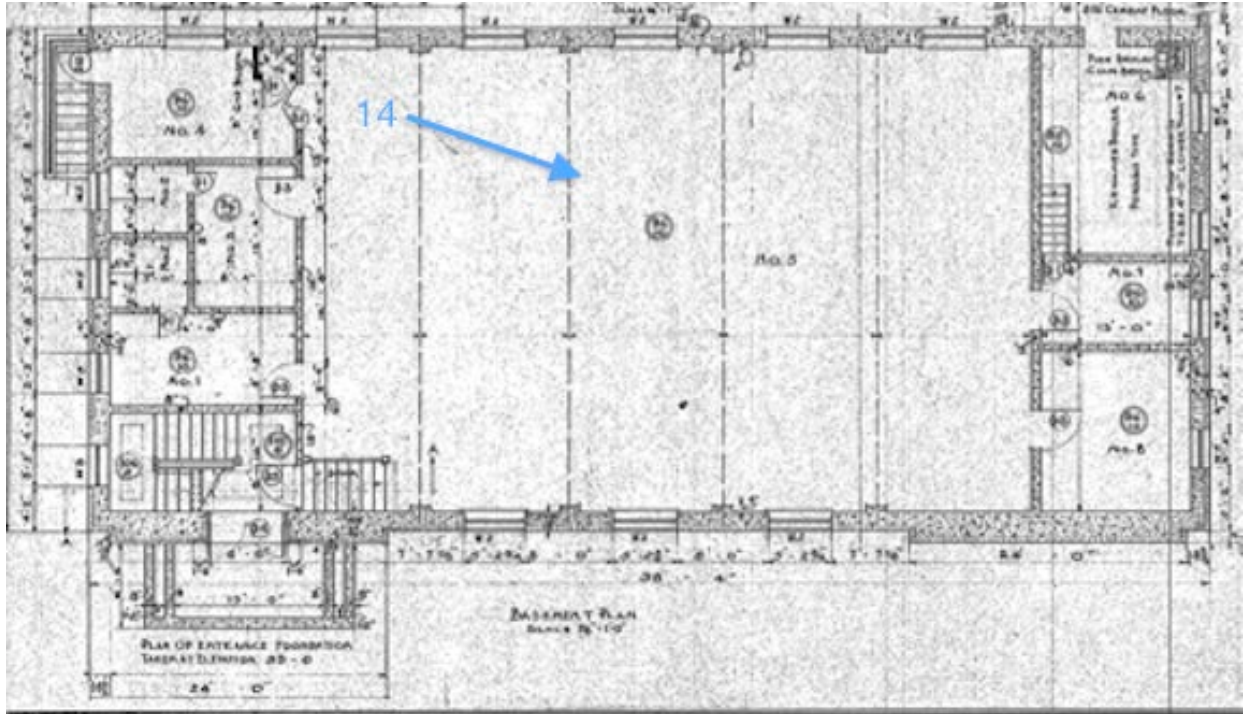




Rapid City Masonic Temple  
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Plan for basement, number key to photographs (in blue)





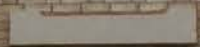


A F & A M

MASONIC CENTER







Handwritten text on a small green sign.







Private Permit  
Parking Only

Private Permit  
Parking Only

Private Permit  
Parking Only

NO PARKING  
ANYTIME

Private Permit  
Parking Only









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MASONIC CENTER

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A.L. 5925

A.D. 1925

JUNE FIFTH

MASONIC TEMPLE

M.W. GRAND MASTER

FREDERICK TREON









south dakota  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



13 October 2016

Keeper of the National Register  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Parks Service  
1201 Eye St NW  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor (MS 2280)  
Washington DC 20005

Dear Keeper of the National Register:

Enclosed are seven National Register of Historic Places nominations: *Farmers and Citizens State Bank, Belle Fourche Band Shell, Sturgis Water Works Company Supply Works Site, Rapid City Masonic Temple, Canton Carnegie Library, Prairie Village Carousel, and Lemmon Petrified Park (Amendment).*

If you have any questions regarding any of these submittals, please feel free to contact me at 605-773-3103 or at [chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us](mailto:chrisb.nelson@state.sd.us).

Sincerely,

Chris B. Nelson  
Historic Preservation Specialist