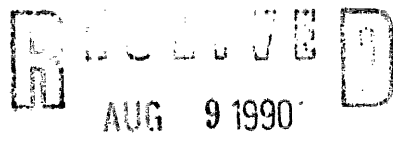


1380

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: First National Bank Of Meeteetse

other name/site number: Bank Museum; Old Bank Building

2. Location

street & number: 1033 Park Avenue

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Meeteetse

vicinity: N/A

state: WY county: Park code: 029 zip code: 82433

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public-Local

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: Zero

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

Entered in the National Register.

I, hereby certify that this 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 of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: financial institution (bank)
Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: museum

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification:
LATE VICTORIAN/Victorian era commercial building

Materials: foundation CONCRETE roof ASPHALT - asphalt/tar composition
walls BRICK other STONE/sandstone window sills

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance:

COMMERCE
ECONOMICS

Period(s) of Significance: 1901 - 1940

Significant Dates : 1901

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office

Other state agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other -- Specify Repository: _____

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References: ZONE 12 EASTING 13/671310 NORTHING 13/4890810

Verbal Boundary Description: __ See continuation sheet.

The nominated property includes Lots 22, 23, and 24 in Block 9 in the original townsite of Meeteetse, as surveyed, platted and recorded in Park County, Wyoming. These lots are commonly known as 133 Park Avenue.

Boundary Justification: __ See continuation sheet.

Lots 22, 23 and 24 in Block 9 in the original townsite of Meeteetse constitutes the entire parcel of land that has historically been associated with the First National Bank of Meeteetse.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Carl McWilliams, Survey and Registration Historian

Organization: Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office

Street and Number: The Barrett Building 2301 Central Avenue

City or Town: Cheyenne State: WY Zip: 82002 (See continuation sheet)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 1
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The town of Meeteetse is situated on the western edge of the Big Horn Basin, in Park County, in northwestern Wyoming. The Greybull River flows from the southwest to the northeast along the western edge of the town, while the setting projects a quiet small town atmosphere that has changed little since the period of significance. The nearest larger communities, both reached by State Highway 120, are Cody, thirty-one miles to the northwest, and Thermopolis, fifty-two miles to the southeast.

The First National Bank building is situated on the northeast corner of Park and Warren Streets in downtown Meeteetse. It is a two story commercial building with a corner entry on a canted facade. The building is composed of bricks of running bond construction, and rests on a poured concrete foundation. The brick walls project above the roof line creating a parapet wall. The roof itself is flat with gravel and tar composition covering. Pilasters composed of decorative, projecting brickwork are extant on both sides of the entry, and on the building's southeast corner.

Fenestration is primarily one over one double hung sash. On the west elevation there are six, one over one double hung sash windows having both vertical and horizontal symmetry. They have sandstone lug sills and segmental arches created by a courses of bricks laid as soldiers. The second story on the south elevation, and the canted facade each have a set of paired double hung sash windows. These windows also have segmental arches created by courses of bricks laid as soldiers, and continuous sandstone lug sills. A large rectangular fixed pane window with a rounded, half-circle top is located on the first story on the south elevation. The half-circle portion of the window has stained glass glazing, and is outlined by a course of bricks laid as soldiers, capped by a course of bricks laid as rowlocks.

The main entry has two wood paneled double hinged doors, each with a large single light. The doors swing inward on a center post, and are topped by a transom light that has been boarded over. Above the entry, but below the paired second story windows, the word "BANK" appears in raised block letters. The year "1901" appears higher up on the canted facade, above the second story windows. A course of bricks laid as soldiers creates a segmental arch over the "1901", mirroring the segmental arches which are extant over the windows. There is one other entry, located on the north end of the west elevation. It is a single wood paneled door with one large light in its upper panel. Two bands of five small lights each are set above and below the large single pane. The ten small lights have stained glass glazing. This entry also has a wooden screen door, and is topped by a transom light. A course of bricks laid as soldiers creates a segmental arch over this entry.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 2
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Prior to the summer of 1989, there was a building immediately adjacent to the bank's east elevation. This building has been razed, however, so the bank's east elevation is now a solid red brick wall with no door or window openings. The bank's north elevation fronts onto an alley. Here, an enclosed wooden stairway provides access to the second story.

The interior of the bank was restored in 1987 in preparation for the building to be adaptively reused as a museum. The restoration work was based on historic photographs and early day newspaper articles which provided insight to the bank's appearance during the period of significance. A key feature of the restoration work was the reinstallation of the original teller's cage. The first floor is comprised of one large room which is used for museum display. The teller's cage and the original vault are included within this room. There are three rooms upstairs. The largest of the three is used as a meeting room for area organizations, while the other two rooms are currently rented by a local artist. Interior perimeter and partition walls are primarily painted plaster. Ceilings have dropped acoustical tile. The floor of the museum has been carpeted, while the upstairs flooring has been covered with linoleum.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 1
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The First National Bank of Meeteetse is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A. The building is significant because it was the cornerstone of Meeteetse's early downtown commercial district. As such, the bank building played a key role in the town's early commercial development. In more recent years the building has remained a focal point for the community, although its function has changed. In an effort to capitalize on the growing interest in heritage tourism, since 1975 the building has served as one of Meeteetse's two museums. Restoration of the building's interior in 1987 augmented its use as a museum. Tourism is having an increasing effect on Meeteetse, in part because the town is located less than ninety miles from Yellowstone National Park. The period of significance begins in 1901, the year in which the bank was built. Although the building continues to function as an integral part of the community, the year 1940 was chosen as an arbitrary ending date for the period of significance. This is to avoid including dates within the last fifty years as the property is not judged to possess exceptional significance.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The boom-like expansion of the Rocky Mountain stockraising system into previously unexploited grasslands during the last quarter of the nineteenth century led to the establishment of numerous regional service centers throughout the intermountain basins and plains of Wyoming. As easily accessible rangelands became overcrowded in the early 1880s, the search for suitable pasturage brought cattlemen into Wyoming's Big Horn Basin. By providing necessary services to the rural hinterlands, the town of Meeteetse quickly became a leading center of trade and commerce within the Basin. The town's location provided ready access to the potential mineral bearing Carter and Absaroka Ranges to the west, arable land along the western Greybull River valley to the east, and to the grazing lands of the western Big Horn Basin. In addition, the development of mail and transportation routes including the Old Fort Washakie-Billings, Montana stage route and the Meeteetse-Red Lodge, Montana Trail facilitated Meeteetse's steadily increasing regional importance.

Meeteetse's fortunes prospered throughout the late 1880s, 90s and into the first and second decades of the new century. Commercial development commenced after the official platting of the town lots and blocks by W.S. Collins in 1896, and subsequent sale of these properties between 1896 and the turn of the century. The establishment of a town mercantile in 1898 and a bank in 1900 by local entrepreneurs solidified the town's hold on the local and regional commercial market. The banking firm, a partnership established by Angus

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 2
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McDonald, a prominent area rancher, Adam Hogg and H.G. Cheeseman, was formed under the name Hogg, Cheeseman, McDonald and Company Bankers. The following year a brick bank building was built, and in 1902, the name was changed to The First National Bank of Meeteetse. The bank occupied the building's first floor until 1975. The second floor, meanwhile, served a variety of functions during the period 1901-1975. It was where the town council met, was a meeting place for numerous civic organizations, and was used by the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company for a number of years.

Events between 1900 and 1920 began to undermine Meeteetse's importance within the Big Horn Basin. Eventually, the advent of large scale irrigation, throughout the Basin, saw the development of new communities that came to surpass Meeteetse in size and importance. Successful irrigation of arable lands within the northern and eastern portions of the Basin and the concomitant influx of Mormon and other farming settlers into these regions created viable competitors to Meeteetse's prominence. Towns such as Burlington, Otto, Basin and Worland quickly outstripped Meeteetse in population, eroding the commercial base from which Meeteetse had previously prospered. The founding of Cody also had an effect on Meeteetse, as the establishment of the Burlington railroad line there sealed Meeteetse's fate. The town remained a viable community, but never regained its prominence among Big Horn Basin communities.

Meeteetse instead evolved as a regional service center to area ranches and to nearby oil fields. The growth of tourism, particularly dude ranching, also affected the town's socioeconomic development beginning in the early 1920s. The nearby Pitchfork and other regional dude ranches attracted people from throughout the United States. The area's isolated beauty and proximity to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks were and are obvious factors in the affect tourism has had on Meeteetse. Although the town lost prominence as the Big Horn Basin's most important early trade center, it nevertheless, retains its distinction as the Basin's first community of significance. The First National Bank building stands as a reminder of Meeteetse's era of prominence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 1
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 11 First National Bank of Meeteetse Page # 1
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On May 28, 1987 the Wyoming Consulting Committee reviewed a proposed nomination for the Meeteetse Downtown Historic District. Because of an on-going community development project, the Committee believed that a number of downtown buildings lacked integrity, and so the nomination was rejected. The Committee did believe, however, that the First National Bank Building merited consideration as an eligible single property, and recommended that a nomination be completed for the bank alone. This nomination, which involved the efforts of several people, is an outgrowth of that recommendation. Dean Sell, Board Member of the Meeteetse Museums, conducted research, and wrote an initial draft history of the bank. Louise Thomas, President of the Meeteetse Museums, encouraged efforts on the local level, and solicited assistance from the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office. In 1985 Hugh Davidson, an intern with the WSHPO who later held the position of Survey and Registration Historian, conducted an intensive level survey and drafted much of the contextual information in section 8. Current WSHPO Survey and Registration Historian, Carl McWilliams, relying on the previous efforts of the above named people, completed the final draft of the nomination.