

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89001992

Date Listed: 11/28/89

US Post Office--Beaver Main
Property Name

Beaver
County

Utah
State

US Post Offices in Utah 1900--1941
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Andrus
Signature of the Keeper

11/28/89
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

The period of significance for this building was given as 1900-1941. Steven Stielstra of the USPS changed it to 1941 to reflect the building's date of construction. The nomination is now officially amended to reflect this change.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1992
OCT 16 1989

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Beaver Main Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 20 South Main Street N/A not for publication
city, town Beaver N/A vicinity
state Utah code UT county Beaver code 001 zip code 84713

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic U.S. Post Offices in Utah 1900-1941
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 12-19-88
Signature of certifying official Date
United States Postal Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

[Signature] Nov 15, 88
Signature of commenting or other official Date
Utah State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Patrick Andrews 11/28/89
 See continuation sheet. Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Other: Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Copper

other Limestone

Tar composition

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Beaver Main Post Office is a one-story, buff-colored brick building on a raised concrete basement. The front facade is symmetrical, divided into five bays devoid of significant detailing. A centered entry bay with two equally-sized window bays on either side break the otherwise plain facade. Granite steps and landing, flanked by square concrete buttresses, provide access to the entry. Above the entry doors, and fronting a transom window is an ornate aluminum grille in which a low-relief sculpted eagle is centered. The facade is terminated by a plain limestone frieze with a slightly projecting molded cornice. A hipped roof, clad with copper, covers the front portion of the building while the rear is covered by a flat built-up tar composition roof. Centered on the ridge of the hipped roof is a square copper and glass cupola.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade (east) is divided into five flat-arched bays. The main entry bay is centered, and flanked on each side by two window bays. The entry bay is slightly recessed from the brick-faced facade and framed in wood. The entry consists of double metal doors with six-light glass panels, topped by a nine-light transom window which rests atop a plain wooden door head. The ornate painted aluminum grille, in which a flat relief sculpted eagle is centered, is set in front of the transom window. Single free-standing lanterns in a torch motif rest atop each of the entry buttresses.

The window bays are identical to each other and of the same dimension as the entry bay. The bays consist of triple-hung six-light windows of wood sash which are set above a plain sandstone panel. The panel is slightly recessed and rests on the limestone facing of the raised basement wall. A plain limestone frieze extends across the facade between the line marking the tops of the bays to a plain, slightly projecting sandstone cornice. "United States Post Office", "Beaver, Utah" is carved into the frieze and centered on the

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1 Beaver MPO

entry. The copper-clad hipped roof is topped by a square cupola--a copper base, centered copper louvers flanked by four-light glass panels, and flat copper cap. A weather vane is set atop the cap.

The south facade is flat and divided into two sections--the front section projecting slightly relative to the rear. Each section contains two window bays identical in design and detail as those of the front facade. Sandstone faces the exposed basement wall, frieze above the window bays, and cornice. Brick faces the remainder of the facade. The hipped roof overlies the front section and the flat built-up tar composition roof covers the rear.

The north facade is almost identical to the south facade. It differs in that one window bay is filled with brick (original construction) and one small one-over-one light double-hung sash window flanks each side of the bricked-in window.

The rear facade is similar in design and use of materials as the front except that the entry has been replaced by a brick-enclosed concrete loading platform. Extending rearward, the platform is slightly offset from the center of the building. The platform opens to the north with a single metal overhead loading door and a single metal pedestrian door. The west and south sides are solid brick. A flat roof with a metal marquee which projects over the loading area covers the platform. Two window bays, identical to those of the front and sides of the main building, flank each side of the platform. A smaller vertically-aligned window with one-over-one, double-hung wood sash occupies the northern corner.

The physical appearance of the Beaver Post Office has not been altered. No major renovations have occurred since its 1941 construction.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Art
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1900-1941

Significant Dates

Site acq.-1938
Const.-1941

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect/-
Federal Government

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Though not yet fifty years old, the Beaver Post Office is exceptionally significant on the state level for art and architecture and on the local level for politics/government. The design is a duplicate of several other western post offices, but it is the only example of Depression-era Federal architecture in Beaver. Moreover, it is the only example of its design-type in Utah. The building and the mural which it contains represent the efforts of the federal government, through its public works and art programs, to assist communities during a period of economic emergency. The mural, one of three post office murals in the state, represents a significant type, period, and style of artistic expression which, through its visual expression, relates to the social history of its locality. Finally, the building symbolizes the linkage between the federal government and local citizens through their home-grown Congressman, Abe Murdock.

ARCHITECTURE

The Beaver Main Post Office is a well-preserved and unaltered example of a small-town, single-purpose post office in the Starved Classical style. The building exhibits the modern or the International design influence in its flat facades and lack of explicitly articulated historical design elements, yet retains Classical symmetry and proportion. Flat brick piers, extending from the exposed basement wall to a broad limestone band, divide the five bays of the facade. These elements are reductions of the pilasters or columns, and the entablature of the Beaux-Arts designs. Ornamentation is stripped and limited to the ornate grille in which is set a low-relief eagle sculpture (also standardized) which rests above the entry doors. Although the building is given an

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Merkley, Avid G., ed. Monuments to Courage: A History of Beaver County. Beaver, UT: Daughters of Utah Pioneers of Beaver County, 1949.
2. Beaver Press, various articles, 1937-1941.
3. Original Floor Plans, 1939.
4. Construction Progress Photographs, June 24-Nov. 24, 1940.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

USPS Facilities Service Center
San Bruno, CA 94099-0330

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.43

UTM References

A 12 356460 4237270
Zone Easting Northing

B _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____

D _____

Quadrangle name: Beaver
Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning in the Northeast corner of Lot 4, Block 21, Plat A, Beaver City Survey, then South 120 feet, West 155 feet, North 120 feet and East 155 feet to point of beginning. The property is on the southwest corner of Main Street and Center Street.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property originally purchased by the federal government for the post office site.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title H.J. "Jim" Kolva, Project Manager; Steve Franks, Research Assistant.
organization Institute for Urban & Local Studies date August 1988
street & number W. 705 1st Avenue telephone (509) 458-6219
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99204

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 Beaver MPO

American Colonial flavor by use of a hipped roof and cupola, the design is modern.

The design represents the culmination of the evolution of federal design in the vastly expanded public buildings programs beginning at the turn of the century. The buildings prior to 1920 were designed in the Beaux-Arts tradition. Those buildings of the early 1930s carry over this tradition, yet begin to show the transition to the modern. The Classical influence remains clear and the historical detailing retains its definition, however the facades become flatter and tend toward simplicity. Federal architecture after the mid-1930s evidences greater refinement and attention to the modern influence. This is strongly evident in the Beaver Post Office which represents the end of the design revolution, which essentially ended at the onset of World War II. As such, it is a significant element in the state's legacy of federal architecture and integral to the group of post offices included in this thematic nomination. Therefore, the building has statewide significance under Criterion C.

ART

According to Dan E. Burke, in the exhibition catalogue for Utah Art of the Depression (1986), the public arts programs sponsored by the federal government in Utah during the Depression were successful in not only in enriching the lives of Utah citizens but also for laying down the first stone in the foundation of a vital cultural movement. The first of the federal programs, the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), functioned from December 1933 to June 1934. Under the direction of the Women's Division of the Utah Civil Works Administration, projects were initially assigned to Utah artists. Included in this body of work were sculptures, sketches, easel paintings and murals for the Utah State Capitol rotunda. After the initial projects were completed, several other artists received commissions to execute murals and easel paintings.

Following PWAP, arts programs were continued under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration of Utah (FERA) which existed in Utah from April 1, 1934 to July 1, 1935. Administered by Judy F. Lund, twenty-two artists produced eighty-three art works. These works included easel paintings, ce-

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 2 Beaver MPO

ramic pieces, woodblock prints, sketches, sculptures, posters and the completion of the State Capitol dome murals. The program allowed completion of projects initiated under PWAP, provided additional opportunity for artists to produce their artwork, and continued federal support for the arts until the beginning of the Section of Painting and Sculpture.

The Section of Painting and Sculpture (renamed the Section of Fine Arts in 1938) was established by the Treasury Department on October 14, 1934. It was under this program that the Beaver mural and murals in the Provo and Helper post offices were completed. The Section, which was administered in Washington, dealt directly with the artists, and selected artists through national and regional design competitions. The Section sought the best decorative art that it could find for designated federal buildings. The intent of the program's administrators was that the work would reflect the themes and styles of the American Scene, with a hope that it would strike a responsive chord in the general public. Although the program is attributed with having fostered an American Regionalism, art critics could never find a coherent body of work that was truly Regionalist or representative of particular sections of the country. The work that was created did, however, portray the American Scene in the form of localized subject matter. Further, the work resulting from the program tended to pursue an inoffensive middle ground of style and content which was sometimes viewed as producing limp platitudes rather than strong statements. This resulted from the requirement for final approval from Washington as well as compliance with local preferences. The strife or dark side of the Depression was not portrayed, but instead the nostalgic and positive events of the American Scene were depicted.

No Utah artist received a commission under the Section of Fine Arts program and none participated in the Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP) which was initiated in July 1935.

The WPA Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP) perhaps made the greatest contribution to the body of Utah art. Implemented in mid-1935, the Utah program was sponsored by the Utah State Institute of Fine Arts. Three areas of activity were covered by the program: (1) creation of art; (2) technical research; and (3) art applied to community service and art

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3 Beaver MPO

education. Several hundred works of art including fourteen murals were added to the collections of the State, and various public agencies and municipalities.

Beaver's mural (approximately 12' X 6', oil on canvas), entitled "Life on the Plains", is attached to the lobby wall over the Postmaster's door. One of only three post office murals in the state, it was executed in 1943 for a sum of \$740. The mural depicts prospectors panning for gold, wranglers rounding up a steer for branding, and traders dealing with local Indians. John W. Beauchamp, the artist, was born in Marion, Indiana on June 22, 1906. He studied under Richard E. Miller, Leon Kroll and F. Lewis Schlemmer and was awarded the Beck Medal for portraiture by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in 1935. His other post office murals included Millinocket, Maine and Muncey, Pennsylvania.

The Beaver Post Office is significant under Criterion A for its historic association with the federal government's New Deal public arts programs. The mural is also significant under Criterion C as an integral part of a building that represents a significant type, period, and style of artistic expression. Finally, the building is eligible under Criterion D because of its information potential relating to artistic expression and techniques of the period, and social history of its locality.

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The building, the city's first federally-constructed post office, is a legacy of the massive federal public works programs which were designed to assist local communities during a period of national economic emergency. Other WPA projects in Beaver at this time included work on local schools, an armory, reservoir, and racetrack. The post office also represents the efforts on the part of local citizens, through their elected representatives in Washington, D.C., to secure a federal building. This linkage is especially meaningful for Beaver since Congressman Abe Murdock (D), who served in the House from 1932 to 1940 and in the Senate from 1940 to 1946, was raised and practiced law in Beaver. The local press credited Murdock, "better known in Beaver as 'Abe'", as "the one man responsible" for the post office, and praised his "splendid efforts in behalf of our

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4 Beaver MPO

little city." The building is locally significant under Criterion A.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Beaver City is in southwestern Utah on the high, Great Basin desert at the foot of the Tushar Mountains. It is the county seat of Beaver County and had an estimated 1984 population of 2,076. Tourism, agriculture and its status as the local retail and service center provide the base for the local economy.

Beaver City was founded by Mormon pioneers in 1856 on the banks of the Beaver River. Because of its high altitude (6,000 feet--which makes for a short growing season) and arid climate, Beaver was settled primarily as a stock raising village, though local farmers have always grown hay, corn and oats. Ross A. Rogers was appointed the settlement's first postmaster on July 24, 1857. After the Mountain Meadows Massacre of 1857, many of the refugees from the abandoned Mormon mission in San Bernardino settled in Beaver, considerably boosting its population. But the young community faced so many hardships and experienced such poverty that church leaders decided new leadership was necessary. John Riggs Murdock of Lehi became Beaver's new leader in 1864 and soon things began to improve. By 1868, there were approximately 1,000 people living in Beaver. It had been designated county seat, and it appeared that the tentative community had finally taken root as a permanent settlement.

In 1870 a woolen factory was built and in 1873 a U.S. military post (Fort Cameron) was established in Beaver. Both contributed greatly to Beaver's growth. By the 1870s Beaver had also become a crossroad for travellers as well as a supplier for the nearby mining towns. While Fort Cameron closed in 1883 and the mills closed in 1900, Beaver's role as a mining supplier and traveller's stop helped it to maintain its commercial position. In 1900 Beaver's population was 1,701; it has fluctuated very little since then (its 1980 population was 1,792). When mining operations in western Beaver County began to decline after the 1910s, it was about then that motor vehicles became more popular and plentiful and Beaver again emerged as an important spot for travellers (this time for tourists).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5 Beaver MPO

The Beaver Post Office is on the southwest corner of Main Street and West Center Street in the city's central business district. Adjacent land uses include the Beaver City Library (one-story brick, Neoclassical, NHR) to the west and the Beaver Stake Visitor's Center (one-story log cabin, 1940, on site of 1865-1866 Tabernacle) to the south. The National Guard Armory (discussed in news coverage of Post Office construction) is south of the log cabin. North of the site, across West Center, is the Mansfield, Murdock & Co. Store (two-story brick, NHR). Two-story brick buildings are north of the Mansfield, Murdock Building (commercial block). One-story brick commercial buildings are in the block opposite the Post Office to the northeast and across Main to the east. Although the Post Office is not within an historic district, the buildings noted as NHR are included in the Beaver Multiple Resource Area which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BEAVER MAIN POST OFFICE

In 1937 Beaver celebrated the 80th anniversary of its 1857 founding. During this time the Beaver Press was able to report considerable progress for the city: on May 21st it reported that the Chamber of Commerce was planning a \$22,000 racetrack for the city, on August 6th it announced that Beaver's new \$25,000 theatre would open that night, and on October 8th it reported that the Beaver City Bank would soon be opening (the town had been without a bank since the closing of the State Bank of Beaver County). The year before there had been discussion of a new hospital and a new armory (articles of March 6, and March 20, 1936).

1938 brought news of progress for Beaver's federal building. On August 4, 1938 the Beaver Press reported "Bids Opened Today for Federal Building Site" (two bids were received). An article of September 22nd explained that Congress had approved the building during the last session, primarily due to the "inexhaustible efforts of Congressman Murdock, better known in Beaver as 'Abe'." (Abe Murdock (D), a resident of Beaver, served in the U.S. Congress from 1932 to 1940, and in the U.S. Senate from 1940 to 1946.) The same article revealed that a new choice for the site was a centrally located corner site, owned by the church. The church

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6 Beaver MPO

was asking \$10,000 for the property, but was willing to lower the price to \$7,500 if the City Council would agree to sponsor a \$2,500 project to improve the adjoining park.

In 1938 the Beaver Press also reported further discussion of the racetrack, which would be built with WPA funds (August 18th article) and it was reported that \$160,000 worth of work was slated for Beaver schools, with \$72,000 coming from the WPA (July 27th and September 29th articles). An article of October 27th commented on the "considerable building and construction work in Beaver County" and mentioned a reservoir project that would also utilize WPA funds. On November 17th the paper announced that the corner site had been approved for the federal building. It was reported that the building would house the Post Office, Forest Service, Farm Administration, County Agent and Welfare Office, and that "this project will help the unemployment problem."

Bids for Beaver's federal building were requested in the Beaver Press on February 8, 1940. On March 7th it was announced that John Bernstson of Salt Lake City was the low bidder with a bid of \$53,436. An article of April 18th reported that excavation was complete, construction had started, and gave credit to Congressman Murdock for his effort in securing the project for Beaver. Another Beaver project was discussed in a Beaver Press editorial of May 2nd--the armory. The editorial noted that the armory project would give employment to WPA workers and cost \$50,000 (Beaver would contribute \$4,300 and the site). A week later the paper reported that the city had agreed on a site and the cash for the armory (May 9th article).

An article of June 6th noted "work progressing on Federal Building"--the plumbing was in and concrete was being poured--but on September 12th it was reported "\$80,000 Federal Project Delayed." Work had been suspended due to failing quarry conditions in the area; arrangements had been made to ship in limestone from Bedford, Indiana. "Beaver May Have to Wait Until Next Summer for New Post Office" was the story of September 26, when it was reported there had been communication with Bedford regarding the "much needed limestone." A month later it was reported that work was moving forward--bricklayers were setting stone, the lawn was in and sidewalks and driveways were completed (October 17th

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7 Beaver MPO

article).

On September 25, 1941 a front page photograph of the Federal Building illustrated an article reporting that the building had been officially opened on September 2nd. On October 3rd another front page article gave credit to Senator Abe Murdock as "the one man responsible for this fine structure" and praised his "splendid efforts in behalf of our little city." The paper also noted that "construction was started over a year ago, but because of the rapidly increasing demand for materials for national defense programs it was not until just a few weeks ago that the building was finished."

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

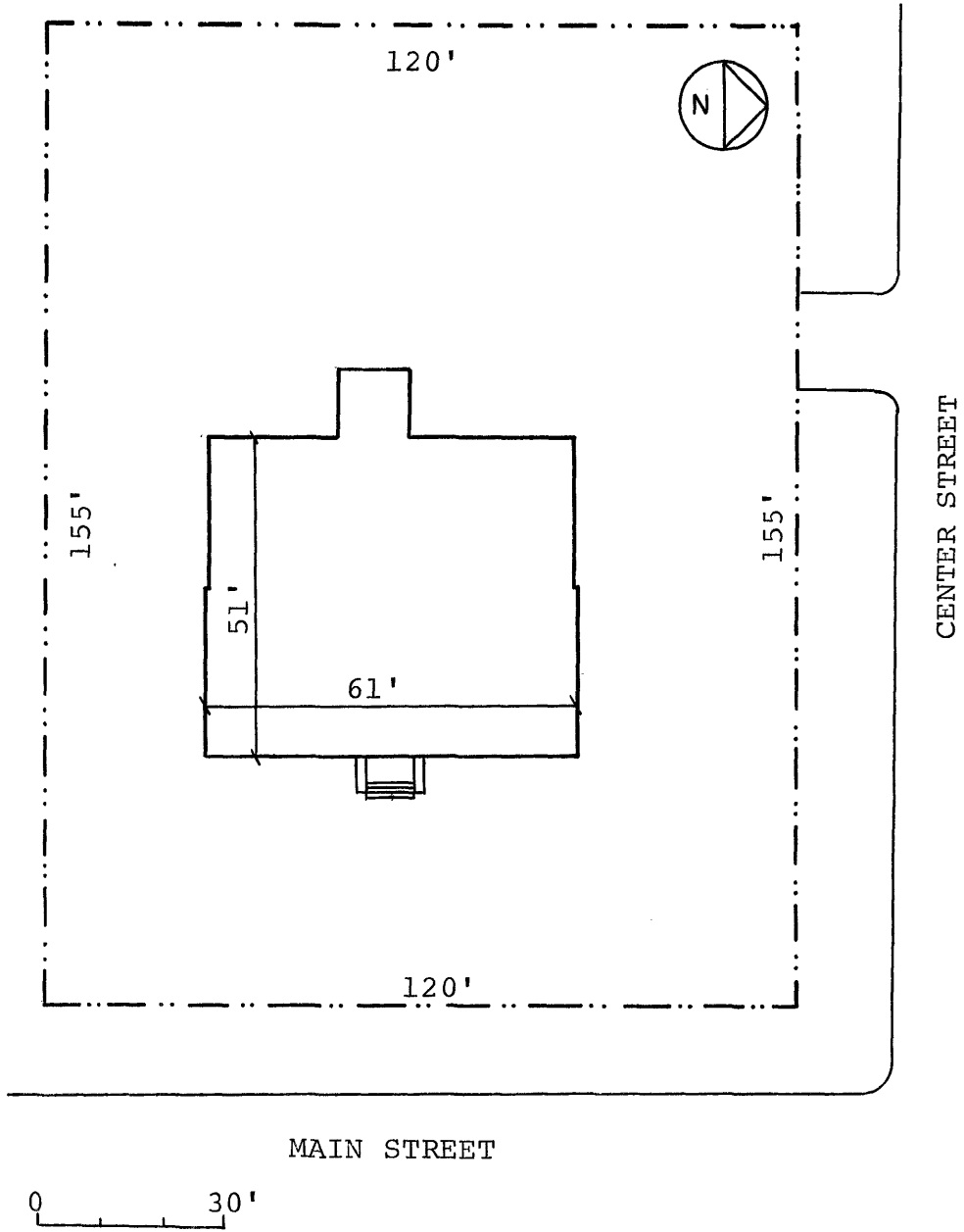
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Beaver MPO

Item number 10

Page 1



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 1 Beaver MPO

The following information is the same for all the photographs listed:

1. Beaver MPO
2. Beaver, Utah
3. Jim Kolva
4. August 1986
5. Negatives on file at USPS Facilities Service Center, San Bruno, CA.

Photo No. 1 (negative #8A)

6. View to northwest

Photo No. 2 (negative #17A)

6. View to west

Photo No. 3 (negative #10A)

6. View to southwest

Photo No. 4 (negative #7A)

6. Mural, north end of lobby