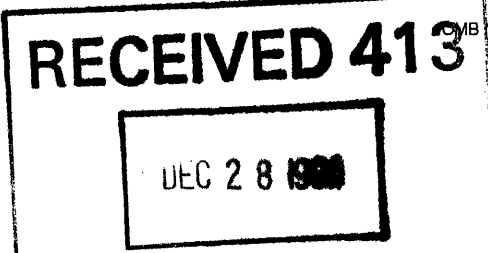


1627



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the appropriate information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Van's Hall
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 321 W. Main Street N/A not for publication
city or town Delta N/A vicinity
state Utah code UT county Millard code 027 zip code 84624

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 _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Walter Mark 12-19-91
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that 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 the Keeper Date of Action

Carl R. Ferguson 1/27/95

Van's Hall
Name of Property

Delta, Millard County, Utah
City, County, and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls STUCCO
CONCRETE BLOCK
roof UNKNOWN
other _____

Narrative Description

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Van's Hall
Name of Property

Delta, Millard County, Utah
City, County, and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" on all that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

c.1926 - 1942

Significant Dates

c.1926

1942

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: none

Builder: William E. Van De Vanter

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Van's Hall
Name of Property

Delta, Millard County, Utah
City, County, and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.53 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/2 3/6/3/7/1/0 4/3/5/6/8/4/0
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

C / / / / / / / / / /

D / / / / / / / / / /

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beg. 1 1/2 ft. w. of NE cor. of Lot 7, Blk. 54, Plat "A", Delta Townsite th. S 204.5 ft.; E 1.5 ft.; S. 10 ft.; W 110 ft.; N. 214.5 ft. E. 108.5 ft. to beg.

Property Tax No. D846

___ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the property are the legal boundaries of the parcel of land on which the building has always been located.

___ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger Roper, Historic Preservation Coordinator; also Delta Historic Preservation Commission members
organization Utah State Historic Preservation Office date November 1994
street & number 300 Rio Grande telephone (801) 533-3500
city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84101-1182

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Continuation Sheets
- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and/or properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.
- Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

name Diane Chidester
street & number 321 W. Main Street telephone (801) 864-2602
city or town Delta state UT zip code 84624

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 7 Page 1

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

Narrative Description

Van's Hall is a two-story stucco-over concrete block, two-part commercial building constructed in phases primarily between about 1915 and the 1930s. The last major remodelling took place in the early 1950s with the reworking of the facade to give it a more uniform appearance. The exterior and interior are nondescript, with the major exception of the second-story dance hall space which is elaborately decorated. Despite the changes to the exterior of the building, the principal feature upon which the building's significance is based, the dance hall, retains its integrity from the historic period (c.1926-1942). The building is located on the town's Main Street in the heart of the business district and is flanked by commercial buildings of similar scale and appearance.

The exact chronology of the building's construction is unclear. A one-story building housing three business spaces was on the property by about 1915 and perhaps as early as 1911. It was expanded by a large garage addition to the rear c.1922. The 1918 and 1923 Sanborn fire insurance maps show all sections of the building being one-story and of frame construction. Photographs of the building at this stage are extant. By 1926 the building was a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival style building with a full-width porch projecting from the front of the building with an open railed porch above. Photographs of the building at this stage are also available. It is unclear whether the second story was added to the original building or whether the two-story building was constructed in its place.¹ The projecting front porch was removed c. 1937² and the arched recessed porch on the second floor was enclosed, expanding the upstairs floor space several feet. Perhaps at that same time the upstairs apartment on the east and second-story room on the west were added.³ The dance hall was embellished over a period of several years, probably beginning in the early 1930s, with the installation of thousands of pieces of mirror and glass in decorative patterns and elements. It was further modified in 1947-48 by installation of the orchestra stage in the northwest corner and by rounding the window surrounds and the ceiling corners in the clerestory. The facade was reworked in the early 1950s to give the building a more uniform appearance.⁴

¹The existing building is constructed of concrete block, so if the second story was added to the 1915 one-story building then the Sanborn maps must have been in error showing it as a frame building. George Van, son of Billy Van, remembers the building as always being two stories. George Van interview with Roger Roper, September 12, 1994.

²George Van interview.

³The c.1926 photograph shows the two-story building without the east section and without the second story on the west wing.

⁴Typescript history of "Billie Van De Vanter," by the Van family, date unknown. Copy available in the National Register files, Utah State Historical Society. Also Nick Snow, "Where Delta's Dancers Tripped the Light Fantastic," *Deseret News*, October 26, 1977, p. C-1.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 7 Page 2

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

The arched openings on the second story, though enclosed, are still discernible over the center four bays.

The building has a concrete foundation and concrete block exterior walls, which are exposed on all but the principal facade which has been stuccoed. Eight square windows are evenly spaced across the upper half of the facade. The two windows on the east have been replaced with aluminum sliders. The other six are 16-pane steel sash windows which probably date from the 1950s remodeling of the exterior. A belt course at the sill level of the second-story windows divides the facade in half. The stuccoed wall surfaces below that belt course have been scored to resemble brick, and the piers painted red, enhancing their brick-like appearance. The storefront area features six doors and two glass-paneled garage doors interspersed with display windows. The storefront has been altered in recent years (probably 1970s or later) by the installation of aluminum frame windows and doors. Apparently original transom windows advertising "Van's Hall" are located over two of the doors on the left half of the facade. These doors provide access to the dance hall above. The only decorative element on the facade is a series of raised, horizontal panels and medallions above the second-story windows. A simple cornice tops the parapet wall.

The interiors on the main floor are non-descript commercial spaces. The upstairs is divided into three sections: an apartment in the easternmost two bays, the dance hall space in the center four bays, and a single room in the western two bays. The dance hall space extends much deeper to the rear than the east and west sections (see floor plan sketches). The apartment appears to have been remodeled in the 1970s and is still in use. The western room is unaltered and is currently used only for storage.

The rectangular dance hall space is virtually unaltered from its 1930s-'40s appearance. It is accessed from a door on the facade. Inside the door, a ticket booth is on the right and the stairs up to the dance hall are straight ahead. Stuccoed arches in the entrance and stairway are decorated on their lower surfaces with mosaic mirrored stars. The pattern of mosaic mirror decorations continues in the dance hall itself, though to a much greater extent. Walls, floors, ceilings, archways, light fixtures, benches, bathroom stalls, the orchestra stage, coat check area, and so forth are all decorated with mirrored stars, diamonds, sunbursts, and other designs. A series of lights (no longer in operation) were strategically placed to enhance the effect of the mirrors. The focal point is a large mirror-surfaced ball suspended from the ceiling in the center of the room. The ball is topped with a replica of the Salt Lake Temple (Mormon) and is girded by a miniature railroad track and train. Light passing down through the circular railroad platform projects onto the floor below: WELCOME TO BILLY VAN'S DANCEHALL. A model airplane is extended out from the globe by a metal arm bearing the banner "WE DANCE NEXT SAT."

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 7 Page 3

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

The dance hall runs lengthwise north and south with a clerestoried full-length section in the center. Two rows of mirrored columns support the clerestory. At the south end are two small, mock fireplaces topped with near life-size statues of a large dog and a lion. Above is an arched stage area in which puppet shows were performed. The orchestra stage is in the northwest corner of the dance hall. It was a c.1947 addition. The coat check area is near the northeast corner, and restrooms are along the east wall. Wood benches bedecked with mirrored decorations line the exterior walls. A door in the southeast corner provides access to an exterior wood stairway at the rear.

Behind the building is the remnant of one of the six "cabins" constructed in the 1920s. It no longer retains its integrity and is therefore a non-contributing building on the property.

___ See continuation sheet

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 8 Page 4

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

Narrative Statement of Significance

Van's Hall, completed in the 1930s, is locally significant as an important social center in Delta and surrounding towns. It was the principal dance hall in the county during its years of operation and the only commercial facility of its kind; others were owned or operated by cities and churches. The primary period of significance for Van's Hall is from c.1926, when it was built, until the death of Billy Van, its creator and owner, in 1942. The building is also architecturally significant for its elaborate and expressive interior. Thousands of mirrors and other features adorn the dance hall, arranged in a exuberant array of designs, some of which are purely decorative and others that symbolize the local Mormon culture. Van's Hall is a unique and important building in both Delta and Millard County.

History

Van's Hall was constructed by William Edward Van De Vanter, known locally as Billy Van.⁵ Billy was born in Kansas City in 1882 and came to Delta from Colorado around 1907.⁶ Delta (known as Melville and Burtner in its early years) was a new community at the time, having been established along the railroad in the heart of an area newly opened to irrigation and agriculture. In 1916 Billy married Elsie Pamela Jacob. They had four sons and two daughters. Billy died in 1942 and Elsie passed away in 1975.

Billy Van was skilled in a variety of building trades and worked on many of the first buildings in Delta and the surrounding area. He was listed as a cement block manufacturer in the 1912-13 state gazetteer and subsequently through 1921 as a plasterer and contractor. In 1922 he opened the Mutt & Jeff Garage in the building he would later expand to accommodate the dance hall. He had owned this property and the buildings on it for over a decade and apparently built the large garage addition on the rear just prior to opening his auto garage. Also around 1922 he built six small "cabins" or detached apartments behind the building. The cabins, built in a courtyard arrangement, were of frame construction with stucco exteriors. They

⁵Billy's name is spelled variously over the years. "Billey" is used in the sign on his auto garage (from a 1920s photograph), while a biographical sketch written by the family in recent years gives the spelling as "Billie." "Billy" was chosen as the most accurate spelling based on the local newspaper article written at the time of his death (Millard County Chronicle, July 2, 1942, p.1) and the spelling found on the large globe in the dance hall.

⁶Family records state that Billy Van came to Delta in 1907. His obituary in the Salt Lake Tribune and the article on his death in the local newspaper place his arrival at 1912. He was apparently in the area as early as January 1911 when he purchased the Clark Street (later renamed Main Street) property on which he constructed his business buildings.

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Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

served as Delta's first motel. They were put to other uses also. Residents of the isolated west desert section of the county rented them so their children could move in for the winter and go to school.⁷ The cabins were sold and moved off the property beginning in the 1940s. Today only part of one cabin remains on the property.

Around 1926 Billy Van expanded his business building further by adding a second story and reworking the facade in a Spanish Colonial Revival style. He further enlarged the second story c.1937 with the addition of an apartment on the east, which his family occupied, and a room on the west. Over the years the building housed a variety of businesses, including the auto garage, a restaurant, apartments, dance hall, and an auto parts store. Elsie, Billy's wife, operated a dry goods store in the lower west section of the building for many years. The garage was used to store automobiles during the cold winter months when they did not run well.

Billy Van was a unique character in Delta's history. He was well known for his inventiveness, building skills, community spirit, and distinctive promotions. He invented an early form of air conditioning, refrigeration units, and a device for use in mines. His air conditioner functioned in the dance hall for a number of years. Upon his death in 1942, the local newspaper noted that Billy had a "particular genius for building small and intricate articles...." The newspaper article specifically referenced his dance hall, with its elaborate decorations and models, and a replica he had made in wood of the Salt Lake Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon or LDS church). The replica, carved with a jack knife, was so accurate in scale and detail that it drew statewide attention and praise from church headquarters in Salt Lake City.⁸ It should be noted that Billy was not a Mormon, though his wife and children were.

Billy Van was an indefatigable promoter with his own distinct style. His auto garage, the Mutt & Jeff Garage, was named after well-known cartoon characters of the period and featured silhouette figures of them and automobiles on the parapet. He had a wishing well placed in front of his business to attract attention and added merry-go-rounds and a menagerie, complete with monkeys, pigs, and a badger. These latter features were part of his attempts to add entertainment to his line of businesses. He had an open-air theater in the ground-floor eastern section of his business block for a time until the realities of inclement weather forced its closure. He also crafted at least two sets of life-size mechanized figures, one of musicians who could "play" to music, and one of moveable baseball players. Billy

⁷Interview with Frank Van, a son, by the Delta Historic Preservation Commission, 1990.

⁸An article on the temple replica appeared in one of the Salt Lake City newspapers. A copy of the undated article is available in the Van's Hall file, Utah State Historic Preservation Office.

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Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

performed puppet shows for a time in the balconied stage on the upper south wall of the dance hall. The dance hall itself was his crowning achievement.⁹

Van's Hall was the only commercial dance hall in Delta and the surrounding area during its primary years of operation (1930s to '50s). Dancing was extremely popular at the time, attracting virtually everyone in the community. Most dances were sponsored by the local LDS church wards (congregations) and held in church facilities. Some dances were also held in the summer months in outdoor dance pavilions constructed in the 1930s as WPA projects in a number of Millard County communities. Delta City also had a new civic amusement hall constructed in 1934 which was used at least occasionally for dances, though its main purpose was for youth recreation and sports.¹⁰ That building, known as the Palomar, was sold in 1937 to the local LDS wards, which used it for dances and other activities.¹¹

Some local residents have noted that the dances at Van's Hall were much more lively than those held in LDS church-owned facilities. Though alcohol was not allowed in Van's Hall, it was widely known that many of the dancers imbibed off the premises. This was probably true of church dances as well. In comparison with church facilities, Van's Hall was obviously the more boisterous and fun-loving venue for dances. And no other facility could compete with the exotic atmosphere of Van's Hall, with its glittering mirrors and lights. It reportedly drew residents from the entire county. Some of the best local musicians provided the music.

Van's Hall continued in operation through the 1950s and '60s, though like most dance halls of its kind, its popularity declined. It was last used for a Christmas party in 1975. Though the dance hall is virtually intact today, it fails to meet many of the current codes required of facilities of this kind. The dance hall sits vacant or is used only occasionally as storage for the auto parts business below. The building is still owned by members of the Van family, who also operate the auto parts store.

The period of significance for Van's Hall ranges from its construction c. 1926 to Billy Van's death in 1942. The dance hall continued as an important social center through the late 1940s and '50s as well, but those dates encroach into the required 50-year period for National Register eligibility. Though 1942 is not completely accurate in reflecting the building's years of significance, it is the best date beyond the 50-year benchmark.

⁹"Billie Van de Vanter" typescript.

¹⁰A dance at the newly completed civic amusement hall was announced in the Millard County Chronicle on November 15, 1934 (p.1).

¹¹Milestones of Millard, p. 650. The Palomar actually accommodated high school basketball games until the 1960s.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. 9 Page 7

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

Bibliography

Delta Historic Preservation Commission. Intensive Level Survey documentation of Van's Hall, 1990. Utah State Historic Preservation Office files.

Millard County Chronicle, July 2, 1942, p.1 (Billy Van obituary).

Reid, Jack. Telephone interview by Roger Roper, November 2, 1994. Mr. Reid played in the band at Van's Hall and is a long-time Delta resident.

Sanborn Map Company. Fire insurance maps for Delta, 1918 and 1923.

Swalberg, Glen. Telephone interview by Roger Roper, November 2, 1994. Mr. Swalberg was a friend of Billy Van and his family and a long-time Delta resident.

Utah State Gazetteer, 1912-28. Utah State Historical Society Library.

Van De Vanter family. Typescript history of Billy Van De Vanter (no date). Copy available in Utah State Historic Preservation Office files.

Van De Vanter, George. Personal interview by Roger Roper, September 12, 1994. Mr. Van De Vanter is a son of Billy Van.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section No. PHOTOS Page 8

Van's Hall, Delta, Millard County, UT

Common Label Information:

1. Van's Hall
2. Delta, Millard County, Utah
3. Photographer: Roger Roper
4. Date: September 1994
5. Negative on file at Utah SHPO.

Photo No. 1:

6. North elevation of building. Camera facing south.

Photo No. 2:

6. North interior elevation of building. Camera facing south.

Photo No. 3:

6. South elevation of building. Camera facing north.