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NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NOV 01 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 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 Rock Springs Elks' Lodge #624

other names/site number Elks' Lodge (848SW7692)

2. Location

street & number 307 C Street not for publication N/A  
city or town Rock Springs vicinity N/A  
state WY code WY county Sweetwater code 037  
zip code 82901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John J. Keck 10/19/93  
Signature of certifying official Date

Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer  
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 commenting or other official 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the National Register

*Greg M. Lapley*

12/10/93

for Signature of Keeper

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

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

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

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

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Social Sub: Meeting Hall

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Social Sub: Meeting Hall

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
roof Tar and Gravel  
walls Concrete and brick  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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

Period of Significance 1922-1943

Significant Dates 1924

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder D. D. Spani, Architect  
F. H. Cowell, Contractor

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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
- X State Historic Preservation Office
- \_\_\_ Other State agency
- \_\_\_ Federal agency
- \_\_\_ Local government
- \_\_\_ University
- \_\_\_ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>12</u>	<u>648500</u>	<u>4604940</u>	3	___	___
2	___	___	___	4	___	___
___	See continuation sheet.					

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Eileen Starr

organization Wyoming Historic Preservation Office date August 1993

street & number 2301 Central Avenue telephone 307-777-6301

city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82002

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage  
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Elks' Lodge No. 624

street & number 307 C Street

city or town Rock Springs state WY zip code 82901

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 6

Rock Springs Elks' Lodge  
name of property  
Sweetwater Co., WY  
County and State

Elks' Lodge #624 is located at the southeast corner of C and Second Streets near the central business district of Rock Springs, Wyoming. Many of the city's noteworthy governmental and commercial buildings are located on the south side of the city's commercial core near the lodge. Completed by 1924, the Elks' Lodge is one of the city's most significant architect-designed buildings. D. D. Spani, an architect who moved to Rock Springs from St. Louis in 1911, designed some of the city's architectural landmarks, including the Elks' Lodge, the Security State Bank Building, the former North Side State Bank, the former Rock Springs High School, and Roosevelt and Yellowstone Schools. Spani chose an Italian Renaissance style for the lodge to illustrate the important role the Elks, as a fraternal organization, played in the community. The building is a substantial three-story brick building with neoclassical features expressed in terra cotta ornamentation. There is no other building similar to this Elks' Lodge in Wyoming. Over the years, the Elks have remodeled the interior, but the exterior of the structure remains almost unchanged; therefore, the building has retained a great deal of its architectural integrity.

The building is rectangular (94' x 96'), and the facade, or west side, faces C Street. A historic photograph taken when the cornerstone was placed in 1922 illustrated that the entire first floor was concrete and faced with brick. The foundation is also concrete. A small raised yard with minimal vegetation was placed in front of the building. This massive structure is rectangular although the architect intentionally recessed the central pavilion on the upper floors, advanced the entry on the first floor, and gave the roof two different heights to offer visual contrast to the design.

Entry to the building is through the advanced pavilion, constructed as a five bay arcade. The brickwork is rusticated to resemble a raised basement story and forces the focal point to the upper stories. Five semicircular arches with elaborate oversized terra cotta keystones ornament the openings. Behind the arcade are non-original wood double doors with opaque glass. Two original brass light standards flank the entrance. At some point, Roman brick was used to infill the changed space. One of the original elks' head doorknobs is placed on the door. Metal grills were placed over all the first story windows, which are double-hung units with twelve lites over 1 lite units. The architectural theme of the rusticated brick and double-hung windows is carried on to either side of the central pavilion. A substantial terra cotta belt course marks the division between the first and second floors.

The second floor of the facade is the most interesting part of the lodge. The main part of the building is recessed behind the entry arcade, and a balcony was placed on top of the arcade. A terra cotta balustrade defines the edge of the balcony. Entry to the balcony is through french doors, located in the middle of the facade, which is surmounted by an elaborate terra cotta broken pediment supported by console brackets on either side. The letters 'BPOE 624' are located in the frieze area beneath the pediment. Flanking the door are two double-hung windows with elaborate terra cotta pediments over the windows; Spani chose to alternate a segmental pediment with a regular pediment in the renaissance tradition. On either side of the balcony are two double-hung windows with flat

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arches and terra cotta lugsills.

On the third story, Spani uses engaged doric pilasters with semicircular recessed window openings with keystones to carry out the same technique he employed on the first floor. Casement windows were placed in the recesses. The brickwork above the windows was laid in a herringbone fashion and a green terra cotta diamond was placed in the middle of the blind arch. The windows on either side of the central block are double-hung and the same as the second floor. Large terra cotta cartouche ornaments flank the windows.

A full terra cotta entablature with cornice, frieze and architrave is located above the windows. Modillion blocks alternate with rosettes as part of the cornice. Dentil molding and other elaborate classical moldings were used to adorn the facade. The cornice projects from the facade. A shield ornament was placed above the entablature in the center of all three blocks. The central recessed block is stepped. Behind the parapet wall, the tar and gravel roof is flat.

The same type of brick was used on the north face or Second Street side of the building. Another entry to the lodge is located here, although the original door has been removed. Generally, the windows are double-hung units with terra cotta sills.

The rear elevation or east side was finished with cheaper face brick that is yellow. Large industrial windows, some operable, were used on this side. Two additional entries were located in the back.

The south side of the building is visible from C Street, and there are two different types and colors of brick used on this elevation. The ground floor has three entries and five double-hung windows. The same window treatment with double-hung windows and terra cotta sills was carried out on the upper floors.

Architectural drawings of the building indicate that D. D. Spani designed a four story building that was more elaborate than the existing building. The building was to have steam bathes, club rooms, and even a public dining room in the basement. A large Palladian window was to ornament the north side. He drew several different facades that must have been discussed with the Lodge's Building Committee. Ultimately, the Lodge built a less grand structure than the architectural drawings indicate.

Originally the lodge had office space on the second floor that was rented to medical professionals. The third floor had the official meeting room of the order. This room remains unchanged with the original wood floor, ornate plaster moldings and furniture. A raised orchestra is located to one side where musicians sit.

During the 1940s, the Kelloggs designed the first major remodeling of the lodge. Substantial changes concerning use of space were made at that time. Later in the 1970s, architect John Frullo designed additional changes for the building. The building's exterior retains much of its original character, yet the building is beginning to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance.

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Rock Springs Elks' Lodge  
name of property  
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The Rock Springs Elks' Lodge is one of the most distinctive Elks' Lodges in Wyoming and one of a few architect-designed buildings in the Italian Renaissance style in the state. As a large fraternal organization in Rock Springs, the Elks attracted men of means, and the members invested in a substantial building to illustrate the prestige of the Elks' organization. According to older members of the Lodge, the Elks' "home" was the place to go in Rock Springs during the 1920s, 1930s, and the 1940s. The Elks' Lodge provided a place for entertainment and recreation; it sponsored a variety of activities including bands and basketball teams. Balls and dinners were held in the building and it was an integral part of the social life of the city during the twentieth century. The Elks' Lodge embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style and is eligible to the National Register under criterion C.

A function of fraternal organizations during the nineteenth century was to unite men with similar goals and ambitions. After the Civil War, fraternal organizations such as the Knights of Pythias and the Elks became popular. One of their original functions was financial assistance to members in need; organizations also offered insurance policies to members. In essence, organizations ensured the welfare of their members.

Charles Vivian, an English actor, belonged to two different fraternal organizations in Britain, the Buffalos and the Jolly Corks. In 1867, Vivian came to New York City and met theatrical people at a private club. To evade the blue laws of the period, several actors formed a private group called the Jolly Corks. A member of the troop died and left his wife and children without any means of support. The group held a benefit, and it was so successful, they decided to emulate other fraternal societies of the day by identifying themselves with a particular animal. The group chose the elk because the animal is monogamous, not offensive, is a herd animal, and can fight. On February 18, 1868, the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks was formed in New York City. A national charter was adopted in 1871. New lodges were soon organized in Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Chicago.

Historian Arthur Schlesinger Sr. wrote in The Rise of the City, 1878-1898, that by the end of the nineteenth century, Americans had become a society of "joiners." Numerous "secret societies" were formed during the last two decades of the century, and over six million Americans belonged to fraternal organizations. Many different groups such as the Owls, the Eagles, and the Woodmen of America were popular in the West.

The role of the fraternal organizations changed in the twentieth century, and most groups played a lesser role in insuring their membership. Many of the groups' primary role became more social rather than welfare.

Men in Sheridan, Wyoming, organized the first Elks' Lodge in the state; it was chartered on November 15, 1899. Soon the cities of Laramie and Rawlins followed. Rock Springs became the 624th lodge in the United States and fourth lodge in Wyoming. Its charter date is November 29, 1900.

The minutes of the Elks' (November 2, 1920) indicated that architect D. D. Spani



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was paid \$1000 for preliminary plans and specifications for the proposed new Elks' home. Construction on the Elks' home was delayed until the Finance Committee agreed that construction would be advisable (October 5, 1920). Members of the Finance Committee were V. J. Facinelli (banker), Thomas Gibson, C. P. Scott, J. W. Hay (banker), August Kendall, and William Derr.

The plans for the proposed Elks' home were accepted by the membership at a special session on June 28, 1921. A building committee was appointed including: V. J. Facinelli, F. S. Davis, H. J. Boice, C. M. Freeman, W. E. Phebus, and Thomas Gibson. The cornerstone for the Elks' Lodge was laid on October 3, 1922. The band for the cornerstone ceremony cost \$78.00.

The minutes on November 13, 1923, state that the total amount of contracts on the new building was \$120,188.45. The Elks sold their old home to the Rock Springs National Bank for \$25,000. The dedication of the new Elks' home took place on March 13, 1924. The Rock Springs Rocket (page 1) reported on March 14, 1924, "The dedication services proper began with Exalted Ruler Brown speaking of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks as typifying neither sect nor creed but standing for the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man." The building was "complete in very detail from baths to library." The newspaper editorialized by writing, "Rock Springs Lodge No. 624 may well be proud of its accomplishments over the comparatively brief period of its existence, its new home being the showplace of the city and attesting the progressiveness of its membership." To celebrate their new lodging, the Elks hosted a ball and banquet and sold over 1,000 tickets to the event.

In June, 1924, Elks' member D. D. Spani indicated that his fee of \$2,352.81 was due. By 1925, the Elks needed to negotiate a loan of \$2,500 to cover the indebtedness of the lodge.

Former Exalted Ruler Modesto (Mud) Grasso joined the Elks in 1938. His earliest memories of the organization were those of assisting people who needed help. The group helped people with polio during the 1930s and 1940s. Formal winter dances were held each year and the Rock Springs Elks' Lodge was the hub of social activity. Recreational opportunities with the Elks' abounded, and the group emphasized family activities. Other fraternal organizations existed in Rock Springs, and it was common for someone to be a member of both the Elks and the Eagles, as was Mud Grasso.

Times have changed and according to Grasso, the number of men who join the Elks has declined. Grasso suggested that with the growing prosperity of Americans, families tend to pursue activities by themselves. This trend has affected the number of Elks nationally. Yet Grasso said of his years of membership, the Elks' Lodge is a "place I will always look up to."

Members of the Elks are required to be male, American, patriotic, and believe in God. The Elks are known for their charitable activities and have donated billions of dollars to worthy causes over the years. Today there are over 1.2 million members and 2,250 lodges in the United States and there are 17 lodges in Wyoming. The Elks in Rock Springs pursue a number of charitable activities.

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- Gardner, Dudley and Verla Flores. Forgotten Frontier: A History of Wyoming Coal Mining. Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1989.
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- Schlesinger, Arthur Sr. The Rise of the City, 1878-1898. New York: Macmillan and Company, 1938.
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Rock Springs Elks' Lodge  
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Verbal Boundary Description

The Elks' Lodge is located at the southeast corner of C Street and Second Street at 307 C Street, Rock Springs. It occupies Lots 8 and 9, Block 22, in the original town plat of Rock Springs, Wyoming.

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Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the lots, 8 and 9, which the building occupies and is defined by the curbs and gutters along C Street (west boundary) and Second Street (north boundary). The alley behind the building defines the east boundary as does the alley on the south side of the building.