

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received DEC 13 1983  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Cahow Barber Shop (MK03-1)

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number Southwest<sup>SW.</sup> Main Street NA not for publication

city, town Chapman NA vicinity of

state Nebraska code 31 county Merrick code 121

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Lone Tree Literary Society

street & number 1818 16th Avenue

city, town Central City NA vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Merrick County Courthouse

street & number 1510 18th Street

city, town Central City state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date On-going  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Lincoln state Nebraska

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>NA</u>

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Cahow Barber Shop is located in Chapman, Merrick County, Nebraska. The false front commercial building, built in 1889, is of frame construction with a gable roof and linteled door and window hoods. The barber shop is presently owned by the Lone Tree Literary Society whose future plans call for restoration of the building for the purpose of preserving the childhood impressions of Central City native and author Wright Morris.

The Cahow Barber Shop, situated on the south-west end of main street in Chapman, Nebraska is a simple, rectangular, one-story, wood-frame structure with a false-front and gable roof. It rests on a foundation of limestone runners and the original clapboard siding is still intact. The ninety-four year old building, which was constructed in May-December of 1889, stands on its original site. The interior has been altered from two rooms to one. The north three-fourths or front of the interior has had the original wainscot and plaster removed and replaced with dry wall while the south one-half or back retains the original wainscot and plaster. The interior wall, dividing the two rooms, has been removed. The existing three windows and three doors are original to the building. The windows are double hung.

The original contents of the building (barber chair, mirror and backboard, clock, and benches) have been kept and are housed in the Merrick County Museum in Central City. The original barber sink is also in safe-keeping by the Museum.

This building, to be restored and housed again with the original barber shop furniture and fixtures, has been added to the properties of the Lone Tree Literary Society whose purpose is to preserve the childhood impressions of author-photographer Wright Morris who was born on the plains of Nebraska on January 6, 1910 at Central City. The Literary Society also owns the Patterson Law Office and the Wright Morris Boyhood home, both located in Central City and both listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates      1889                      Builder/Architect      NA

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Cahow Barber Shop is significant in the field of literature as it relates to the writings of Central City's noted author, Wright Morris. Appearing in Mr. Morris's literary works, both in writing and photographs, the barber shop stands as a reminder of the childhood impressions of the author's life. Architecturally significant, the barber shop stands as the only remaining nineteenth century frame commercial building in the downtown business district of Chapman.

The Cahow Barber Shop in Chapman, Nebraska is the place where Will Morris (the father of Wright Morris) "first set eyes" on his future wife. On page five in Will's Boy, Wright Morris writes, "On weekends in Chapman the farmers parked their buggies at the hitch bar in front of Cahow's Barber Shop. . . According to Eddie Cahow, my father first set eyes on my mother, leaping from the chair, the cloth dangling from his collar, to help her down from the buggy. That is the story and who am I to change it?"

Wright Morris was born January 6, 1910 in Central City, Nebraska to William H. and Ethel Grace (Osborn) Morris. His mother, died six days after his birth and is buried in the Chapman Cemetery nearby. In 1919, Morris moved with his father to the urban environment of Omaha, and six years later to Chicago.

Wright Morris is regarded as one of this country's most gifted writers. He received the national book award in 1956 for his novel, The Field of Vision. He has published extensively and has received three Guggenheim fellowships. From 1962-1975 he was professor of Creative Writing at San Francisco State University. Repeatedly, in the course of Wright Morris's work, there is a return to the territory of his birth, with many of his books being set in Nebraska.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

1. God's Country and My People, New York, Harper & Row, 1968.
2. The Inhabitants, New York, Charles Scribner's & Sons, 1946.
3. The Home Place, New York, Charles Scribner's & Sons, 1948.
4. Wright Morris - Photographs and Words, New York, Harper & Row, 1982.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Chapman, Nebr.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is located on the east seventeen (17) feet of lot four (4), block twenty-six (26), in the Original Town of Chapman, Merrick County, Nebraska, including all historically associated real estate.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code
state	NA	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara A. Gorgen, President/Edited by Joni Gilkerson, Preservation Associate  
Nebraska State Historical Society

organization Lone Tree Literary Society date October 1983  
P. O. Box 82554

street & number 1818 16th Avenue telephone (402) 471-3270

city or town Central City/Lincoln state Nebraska

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Marvin D. Knott date 12/1/83

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society. date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

1/12/84

for Alvina Byer  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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 Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Luther Cahow (referred to as "Eddie" Cahow in Morris' literary works) purchased the Barber Shop in 1902 where he barbered for 47 years. He sold the building in 1949. Mr. Cahow was born in Stuart, Iowa in December of 1872, coming to Chapman, Nebraska in 1881 residing on a farm outside of town. Several years later, he moved to town and lived with family relatives. In 1894, Mr. Cahow left Chapman and traveled through Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, and South Dakota, returning to Chapman in 1896. The Cahows were natives of England and earlier generations had lived in the state of Maryland. Mr. Cahow was married to Laura Mae Fishburn, on April 10, 1901, having one son, Gerald Vaughn, who was born in March of 1904. He died in November 1950 at the age of 77 years. The following paragraph is taken from one of Morris' books which talks about the barber shop.

"In the mirror where the things of this world were reflected, my father and mother exchanged their first glances, an Eden full of the ringing chirp of Cahow's shears."

---God's Country and My People

by Wright Morris, 1968

Photographs of the interior of the Cahow Barber Shop appear in several of Morris' books; The Inhabitants, God's Country and My People, The Home Place, and Wright Morris - Photographs and Words.

Architecturally significant, the Cahow Barber Shop represents a rare local example of a frame false-front commercial building, typical of many modest structures put up by local businessman in small towns throughout Nebraska in the late nineteenth century. In Chapman, the structure stands as the only remaining frame commercial building in the downtown business district. The town hotel (c. 1880's), a significant two story frame structure located on the corner east of the barber shop, was torn down last spring to make way for a new masonic lodge. The remaining business properties are constructed of brick or concrete block, with several modern intrusions consisting of pre-fab metal buildings.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Cahow Barber Shop  
Merrick County  
NEBRASKA

Working No. DEC 13 1983  
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-5-85  
Date Due: 1/12/84 - 1/27/84  
Action:  ACCEPT 1/12/84  
 RETURN  
 REJECT  
Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the  
National Register

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_  
Discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

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**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone (402) 471-3270

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1500 R STREET, BOX 82554  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 68501

December 1, 1983

Ms. Carol Shull  
Chief of Registration  
National Register of  
Historic Places  
1100 "L" Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Cahow Barber Shop  
Chapman, Nebraska

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find enclosed the National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the above named property. This nomination has met all notification and other requirements, as established in 36 CFR Part 60.

If you have any questions regarding the nomination, please let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Marvin F. Kivett', written in a cursive style.

Marvin F. Kivett  
State Historic Preservation Officer

MFK:dbm

Enclosures