

PH0660663

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

HCRS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 23 1978

DATE ENTERED SEP 13 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Van Tassell Carriage Barn

AND/OR COMMON

Cheyenne Art Center

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1010 East 16th Street (at the Morrie Avenue entrance to
Holliday Park)

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First

STATE

Wyoming

CODE

56

COUNTY

Laramie

CODE

021 ✓

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO Closed Mondays

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER: Art

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Cheyenne

STREET & NUMBER

City and County Building, 19th and Carey Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wyoming 82001

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

City and County Building

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82001

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wyoming Recreation Commission, Survey of Historic Sites, Markers and Monuments

DATE

1967 (revised 1973)

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Wyoming Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82002

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>1960</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Van Tassell mansion, greenhouse and carriage barn, originally known as the Thomas residence, were of the same style and period as the Washington, D. C. residence of the Superintendent of the Naval Observatory, a structure that now serves as the home of the United States Vice President. The Thomas residence, designed by Architect George D. Rainsford, incorporated the best features of the Queen Anne style in the Late Victorian period. However, the only structure of the Thomas residence that remains today is the carriage barn which, following demolition of the Thomas mansion, was moved—minus its spired cupola—to Holliday Park in Cheyenne where it serves as the home of the Cheyenne Artists' Guild. When it was moved to the park about 1960, the carriage barn was turned slightly clockwise, so that today its main entrance faces south instead of east.

The carriage barn is a frame, two-story, rectangular structure approximately 55 feet long by 38 feet wide. Its hip roof, covered with wooden shingles painted red, contains cross gables on the west and north ends and dormers on the east and south ends. The west gable contains a porthole window, above which is a hoist beam and below which is a set of French doors opening to a wooden fire escape. The north gable contains a lunette window. The low, sloping east dormer contains three, rectangular, sliding-sash windows that replace haymow doors. The prominent south dormer contains three small windows, above which is a hoist beam. Eight square windows spaced below the roof line on the east and south faces, two sets of French doors on the south face, and a single door capped by a bracketed hood and located on the east face account for other building openings. Except for the main, or south, face which is covered with unpainted shake shingles, exterior walls of the carriage barn are covered with wooden shingles painted white; first level shingles are rectangular and those above, extending to the roof line, are cut in a curved shape to resemble English tiles. The entire structure is surrounded by a six-foot-high chain link fence and locked gate, topped with several strands of barbed wire.

Major exterior changes, in addition to removal of the cupola, include the removal of the original barn doors and their replacement by slab doors. The three pairs of French doors, which were gifts from the Wyoming Consistory, replace doors in the main entrance, gallery entrance and west haymow exit. The fire escape from the haymow exit was added in 1974. The cedar shakes on the south side of the building were added because of a fad, and because original building shingles sustained bruises and breaks during removal of the barn to Holliday Park. All of the remodelling was done under the supervision of the late Cheyenne architect and former Cheyenne Artists' Guild President, Frederick H. Porter, who was an admirer of Rainsford's work and the classic carriage barn. Although Porter did not like the cedar shakes, which covered two barn windows, he regarded them as an expedient until the facade could be restored to its original condition.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1886

BUILDER/ARCHITECT George D. Rainsford and
William Bates

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Between thirty and forty Wyoming structures were designed by George D. Rainsford, architect to cattle barons. One of them was the J. B. Thomas residence that was acquired by Wyoming stockman Robert S. Van Tassell in 1892. The Cheyenne Daily Sun of September 8, 1892 states:

R. S. Van Tassell, a gentleman who deserves a full share of all the good things going, is now the owner of the magnificent 'Thomas residence,' facing Minnehaha (Holliday) lake and park and surrounded by the handsomest grounds in the state. The purchase was made from the Omaha man to whom the original owner sold. The barn is a feature and there were picked from the vines in the hothouse a few evenings ago over 200 pounds of grapes.

Van Tassell came to the West in 1865. He worked for the Union Pacific Railroad and was in an advance party of fifty men sent in 1866 to Sherman Hill to form log cutting crews. In 1867 the railroad arrived in Cheyenne and from 1867 to 1870 Van Tassell carried contract mail from Fort Collins to Cheyenne. Some time during this period he also worked as a freighter for Jim Moore, who in 1869 was conceded to be second only to John W. Iliff in the number of cattle owned by an individual in Wyoming. Moore died when he was thrown from a hayrack by a runaway team, and Van Tassell then married Moore's widow, succeeding to the JM brand.* After his wife's death, Van Tassell married the daughter of an acknowledged cattle king, Alexander Swan. Swan's wedding gift to the couple was a mansion on "cattleman's row" or Carey Avenue, in Cheyenne. Several authors link Van Tassell with the Johnson County War, including William Chapin Deming, Helena Huntington Smith and John Rolfe Burroughs. The latter, in his book Guardian of the Grasslands, writes of a meeting called in Van Tassell's livery barn to form a vigilante committee to cope with cattle thieves. Banditti of the Plains is a book that even more explicitly describes Van Tassell's involvement in the Johnson County War.

After the bad winter of 1886-1887, Van Tassell's father-in-law failed in business, leaving Robert devoid of assets and saddled with \$150,000 in liabilities. Nevertheless, Van Tassell not only paid off his debts, he ended up with four ranches

*The town of Jay Em in Goshen County was named for Moore's brand, and a town in Niobrara County was named for Van Tassell.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 516520 4553880
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Gladys Jones, Membership Chairman, Historian and Mark Junge, Historian

ORGANIZATION Cheyenne Artists' Guild Wyoming Rec. Comm. DATE October 15, 1977

STREET & NUMBER 1010 East 16th Street 604 East 25th Street TELEPHONE (307) 777-7695 (WRC)

CITY OR TOWN Cheyenne STATE Wyoming 82002

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

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 Jan L. Wilson

TITLE Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer DATE January 10, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<u>R. B. Rettig</u>	DATE <u>9/13/78</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST <u>William G. Bouch</u>	DATE <u>September 11, 1978</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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CONTINUATION SHEET Van Tassell

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The main entrance to the carriage barn is recessed and also covered with shake shingles. Within the recess a set of double doors opens to the main floor vestibule from which one may proceed to any of three, major spaces on the main floor. On the west side is a gallery, on the northeast side is an art supply and gift shop, and between the two is a small kitchen. On the southeast side is the third major space containing two restrooms, a storage area and a stairway to the second floor. The second floor is occupied by a large, open area used as an art studio. The only intrusions on the second floor are three braces that distribute the weight of the roof to first floor ceiling beams, and four braces that once supported the building's cupola and served as a hay chute. The placement of a floor within the framework has provided an open clothes closet.

The original use of floor space in the carriage barn is not difficult to determine. The art gallery was the carriage room. The art supply and gift shop, which helps to support the non-profit guild, is where the horse stalls once were located. Partitions between the stalls were removed, but most of the wooden support posts remain. Adjacent to the stalls was the tack room, which eventually were converted to restrooms and a storage area. The second floor was occupied by the haymow. Other modifications, such as the installation of electricity, and the use of burlap, wood and brick to cover scarred walls, were made in the carriage barn in order to provide space functional to the art center. However, the basic barn remains intact, and probably will continue to be preserved as long as a need for it exists.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Van Tassell

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In conclusion, the Van Tassell carriage barn is significant for several reasons. It was designed by prominent Architect George D. Rainsford, and is one of the last, great carriage barns remaining in Cheyenne. The particular love Rainsford had for horses is demonstrated by the workmanship displayed in the Van Tassell carriage barn. The relationship of the carriage barn to the Van Tassells is also significant, since Van Tassell was a prominent Wyoming stockman and thus an influential community leader. Finally, the fact that the barn serves a worthy purpose—the promotion of art in the Cheyenne community—is important in consideration of its present value, and in consideration of the chance for its preservation.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Van Tassell ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

totaling over 50,000 acres, a finger in every Cheyenne business pie, and a residence at East Seventeenth Street and Morrie Avenue. Van Tassell's third wife, Maude Bradley, outlived him and eventually willed their home to the public. The attached copy of an abstract of the property, however does not explain how the carriage barn managed to survive while the Van Tassell mansion became destroyed.

About 1960 Cheyenne Architect Frederick H. Porter looked into the possibility of having the carriage barn building moved to Holliday Park. Using a tape measure he found that it could be done without cutting down a single tree in the process. But the Cheyenne Artists' Guild, at that time housed in a weather bureau building, hesitated too long in deciding to move into the building. At that time there was a need for a youth center in Cheyenne, and the carriage barn was remodelled for that use. The "teen center" was shortlived, however, and the Artists' Guild—an active, expanding organization whose purpose is to promote art in the community—leased the barn from the City of Cheyenne.*

The Cheyenne Artists' Guild moved into the Van Tassell carriage barn on July 4, 1967, Cheyenne's centennial year. Having spent the entire proceeds of its building fund to clear a debt on the building owned by the former occupants, it was necessary for the organization to borrow money to finance renovation of the carriage barn so that the structure could serve as an art center. Alas, poor barn! Its tall cupola had been removed sometime before the move to Holliday Park. Cheap slab doors replaced the barn doors. It was dark and dirty and smelled of stale grease. Chaff sifted through the ceiling when the first hammering was begun, and a ladder was the only access to the haymow. Although no structural changes had to be made in the barn, whole guild families worked evenings and weekends to clean, paint and repair the building.

Today the carriage barn continues to function as the home of the Cheyenne Artists' Guild. That organization, in its twenty-eighth year, continues to promote art in Cheyenne with traveling exhibits, art competitions, member exhibits and a continuous display of High Plains art. A series of programs in the visual arts from September to May, summer activities, a senior high school art scholarship competition and the development of a scholarship fund to support it, are insurance for the continuation of a climate for local art.

*Founded on May 19, 1949, the Artists' Guild provided Cheyenne with an art gallery, the only one in town until the Wyoming State Art Gallery was created in 1969. It also held instruction in art and was the only organization to perform that task until the Laramie County Community College took over adult art classes in Cheyenne.

ADDENDUM



ITEM 9: MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BOOKS:

Burroughs, John Rolfe. Guardian of the Grasslands. Cheyenne, Wyoming: Pioneer Printing and Stationery Company, 1971.

Gowans, Alan. Gowans' Images of American Living. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1964.

Laramie County Historical Society. Early Cheyenne Homes, 1880-1890. Cheyenne, Wyoming: Pioneer Printing and Stationery Company, 1962.

Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.

Mercer, A. S. The Banditti of the Plains. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954 Reprint Edition.

Sloan, Eric. An Age of Barns. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1966.

Smith, Helena Huntington. The War on Powder River. New York: McGraw Hill Company, 1966.

JOURNALS:

Bass, Mabel, "What's in a Name?", Annals of Wyoming, XXXII, 2 (October, 1960).

"Women of the Range," Annals of Wyoming, XXI, 1-3 (October, 1949).

NEWSPAPERS:

"A Brilliant Wedding," Cheyenne Daily Sun, 10 December, 1886, 3.

Guthrie, W. E., "Johnson County War Participant Recalls Cattle Baron Days," Wyoming (Sunday) Tribune-Eagle, 21 July, 1974, c-13.

Jones, Gladys, "Artists' Guild Observing 25th Anniversary May 6," Wyoming (Sunday) Tribune-Eagle, 5 May, 1974, 16.

"Owns the Thomas House," Cheyenne Daily Sun, 8 September, 1892, 3.

ADDENDUM
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MISCELLANEOUS:

"History of the Diamond Ranch," no author. Available at Wyoming State Historical Department, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

"Records of the Cheyenne Artists' Guild, Inc.," 1010 East Sixteenth Street, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

"Records of the Laramie County Clerk," City and County Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Robinson, Willard B., "Northwest Architecture, 1843-1893," M.A. Thesis done at Rice Institute, April, 1960. Film #H12, available at Wyoming State Historical Department, Cheyenne, Wyoming.



ADDENDUM

ABSTRACT FOR BLOCK 380, LOTS 1, 2, 3 AND 4 (from the records of the County Clerk of Laramie County, Cheyenne, Wyoming).

BLOCK 380, LOTS 1 AND 2:

City of Cheyenne to Jas. Freeman, War. Deed, Bk. F, pp. 125, 12/19/1876.
Jas. Freeman and wife to John B. Thomas, Bk. 32, pp. 140, 11/19/1885.

BLOCK 380, LOTS 3 AND 4:

City of Cheyenne to Wm. Hibbard, War. Deed, Bk. 10, pp. 34, 6/26/1878.
Wm. Hibbard to Albert T. Babbit, War. Deed, Bk. 10, pp. 325, 8/31/1881.
Albert T. Babbit to Ada Jeffrey, War. Deed, Bk. 10, pp. 325, 12/7/1881.
Ada Jeffrey to Isabell Recker, War. Deed, Bk. 15, pp. 245, 12/1/1882.
Isabell Recker to T. A. Kent, Mort., 1882.
Isabell Recker to Chas. W. Riner, Jas. B. Pollard, War. Deed, Bk. 18, pp. 272, 6/27/1883.
Chas. W. Riner to Jas. B. Pollard, War. Deed, Bk. 20, pp. 77, 10/13/1883.
Jas. B. Pollard to H. E. Teschmacher, War. Deed, Bk. 25, pp. 434, 11/11/1884.
H. E. Teschmacher to John B. Thomas, War. Deed, Bk. 25, pp. 436, 11/11/1884.

BLOCK 380, LOTS 1, 2, 3 AND 4:

John B. Thomas and wife to Wm. Sturgis, Jr., War. Deed, Bk. 57, pp. 78, 1/18/1888.
Wm. Sturgis, Jr. to Frances Sistare Thomas, War. Deed, Bk. 57, pp. 79, 1/18/1888.
John B. Thomas to Minnie E. Stratton, War. Deed, Bk. 76, pp. 516, 7/2/1892.
Minnie E. Stratton and husband to John B. Thomas, Mort., Bk. 77, pp. 514, 7/2/1892.
Minnie E. Stratton and husband to John B. Thomas, Mort., Bk. 77, pp. 514, 7/15/1892.
Minnie E. Stratton and husband to John B. Thomas, Released 7/1/1895.
Minnie E. Stratton and husband to R. S. Van Tassell, Bk. 76, pp. 546, 8/19/1892.
R. S. Van Tassell to Calvin F. Hummel, War. Deed, Bk. 82, pp. 463, 7/25/1893.
Calvin F. Hummel to Louise S. Van Tassell, War. Deed, Bk. 82, pp. 465, 7/25/1893.
Louise S. Van Tassell and husband to Clyde M. Watts, War. Deed, Bk. 97, pp. 110, 8/19/1897.
Clyde M. Watts to Renssaelaer S. Van Tassell, Quit Claim, Bk. 97, pp. 111, 8/19/1897.
City of Cheyenne, to R. S. Van Tassell, Lien, Bk. 258, pp. 467, \$1,166.42, 9/29/1925.
Sam M. Thompson, Judge in re estate Renssaelaer S. Van Tassell, decd. order, Bk. 329, pp. 44, 10/27/1932.
In re estate Maude B. Van Tassell, decd. to the public, order, Bk. 488, pp. 512, 8/7/1950.
Glenn W. Koford et ux, J. Delroy Shingle et ux mtg. contract Bk. 491, pp. 455, \$10,000, 8/1/1950.
Glenn W. Koford to Frances Sistare Thomas, et al defts., judgement, Bk. 494, pp. 219, 1/8/1951.

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- Glenn W. Koford et ux to J. F. Woodson, War. Deed, Bk. 700, pp. 18, 8/25/1960.
J. F. Woodson et ux to Stockgrowers National Bank, Mtg., Bk. 705, pp. 41,
\$40,000, 12/30/1960.
J. F. Woodson to Glenn W. Koford, Mtg., Bk. 705, pp. 44, \$35,000, 12/31/1960.
J. F. Woodson to W. R. Jensen, War. Deed, Bk. 775, pp. 429, 9/11/1964.
W. R. Jensen to James F. Woodson et al option to purchase, Bk. 796, pp. 69, 9/11/1964.
W. R. Jensen to Wyoming Consistory #1, a corporation, War. Deed, (10&c), Bk. 844,
pp. 67, 11/4/1960.
Wyoming Consistory #1 to Imperial Homes, Inc., War. Deed, (10&c), Bk. 962, pp. 115,
9/22/1972.
James F. Woodson to Wyoming Consistory #1, Quit Claim Deed, Bk. 962, pp. 115,
10/30/1972.