

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

OCT 12 1983

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Clearmont Jail

and/or common Clearmont Jail

2. Location

street & number Water Street _____ not for publication

city, town Clearmont _____ vicinity of N/A

state Wyoming code 056 county Sheridan code 033

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Clearmont

street & number Water Street PO Box 127

city, town Clearmont _____ vicinity of N/A state Wyoming 82835

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sheridan County Courthouse

street & number South Main

city, town Sheridan _____ state Wyoming 82801

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title WY Historical Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 _____ federal _____ state county _____ local

depository for survey records Wyoming Recreation Commission, 1920 Thomes Ave.

city, town Cheyenne _____ state Wyoming 82002

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

n/a moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Clearmont, Wyoming is primarily an agricultural area located in the northwest portion of the state. Located behind the Clearmont Town Hall, constructed in 1939, the Clearmont Jail is a solid steel and concrete structure with walls five and one-half inches thick. The jail has retained its integrity and strongly communicates the sense that the building was designed to house prisoners. Two frame additions were constructed on the northeast sides of the jail; one of these additions was Clearmont's pump house (both were demolished in 1983), remains and is included in the nominated area. Twelve feet wide by fourteen feet, four inches long, and nine feet high, the exterior of the building is coated with rough, painted concrete overall. The interior has a three-foot-wide hallway across the front and two cells with barred doors, separated by a solid concrete and steel wall. The jail has a gable roof.

Two barred windows on the jail front measure 1' 5" x 2' 7", and the barred front door is 2' x 10" x 6' 8". A wooden door inside the front barred door offered some protection from the weather when closed; the original glass panes in this door have been replaced with plywood, part of which is broken. Besides an accumulation of dirt and broken glass inside the front hallway, the only signs of deterioration in the building are in the weathered wooden window and door frames.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1922

Builder/Architect

Wilkins and Cooper

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The agricultural town of Clearmont, Wyoming was incorporated in 1919. Leiter Estates, the developers of an agricultural business, requested that the town of Clearmont construct a jail due to the growing migrant farm worker populations. Because of this increasing transient population, crime became a problem for the town. Therefore, in 1922, the Town Council funded the construction of a jail. As one of Clearmont's first public buildings, the jail was frequently utilized. Today the jail still symbolizes the town's need for law and order in its early frontier days.

SEE ADDENDUM

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ADDENDUM

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Clearmont, Wyoming

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References:

A

1	3	3	9	0	6	0	0	4	9	4	3	5	6	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated area includes only the jail which is located along Water Street in Clearmont, Wyoming. The jail has had additions removed and is located directly behind Clearmont's Town Hall, which was constructed in 1939 and not eligible for the National Register at this time. SEE ADDENDUM

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mrs. Ann Arndt /Mike Gorman

organization Wyoming Recreation Commission

date June 29, 1982

street & number Water Street PO Box 62/1920 Thomes telephone 307-758-4466

city or town Clearmont /Cheyenne

state Wyoming 82835

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

Alvin J. Baston

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 9/28/83

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

[Signature]

date

5/14/1984

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Statement of Significance

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The Town of Clearmont, located in the Clear Creek Valley of Sheridan County, was founded in 1892 by the Burlington Missouri Railroad which had reached the area that year. In 1893, work was begun on a rail line running from Clearmont to the Town of Sheridan.

In this early period of Clearmont's history, the predominant industry of the Clear Creek Valley was cattle ranching. The great numbers of cowboys who descended on Clearmont every Saturday night, sometimes engaging in gunplay, gave the town the reputation of "Bloody Clearmont." A visitor at this time (1896) commented that "there were about a dozen little shacks in Clearmont covered with black tar paper with laths nailed in to hold the paper." A dozen years later, another traveler noted that the town had grown, having "a couple of saloons, two stores and a railroad station."

Just as the railroad was the lifeblood for the Clear Creek Valley cattle interests, it also spelled doom for the ranching industry of the area; the railroad brought farmers into the area. As early as 1884, irrigation had begun in the valley, and, in 1900, when the L.Z. Leiter Company bought most of the valley, the land was divided and operated by individual farmers. Leiter also built facilities in the Town of Clearmont: machine shops, elevators, and a commissary. The Lake DeSmet Irrigation Project, begun by Leiter in 1907, further boosted agriculture in the region.

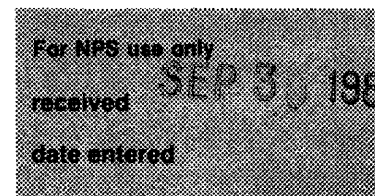
Clearmont was incorporated in 1919. In the same year, Leiter Company officials asked the Clearmont Town Council to authorize construction of a jail. Due to a growing population, town officials became concerned about fire protection and law enforcement. In April, 1922, the Town Council accepted a bid from Wilkens and Cooper for \$827.00 to construct a jail; the building was completed the same year.

In 1922, Frank Dunkin began a long and stormy career as Clearmont's Town Marshall. He was paid \$110.00 a month. A few months after his appointment, his wages were reduced to \$35.00 a month. In November of 1923 he took on the additional job of Water Commissioner, for a total of \$85.00 a month, which he received until the 1930's. Marshall Dunkin impressed the citizens of the town with his boxing ability one day when he gave Pete Redman a real beating. From that day on, Frank Dunkin was remembered as a "gutty little man" who never carried a gun, but who could march a whole line of gandy dancers to jail all by himself. It is reported that Frank Dunkin used the jail a lot, mostly for drunks and bootleggers. Between the years of 1922 and 1924 the former Marshall Pete Redman sued the Town of Clearmont for \$600.00 for one year's Marshall's wages. The Town Council voted repeatedly not to pay him. Instead, they decided to buy a stove for the jail.

In December of 1924, Willson Clark was appointed as Clearmont's Marshall and Water Commissioner, and he resigned in 1926. Frank Dunkin was reinstated at the same meeting when Clark resigned. It is not known exactly how long Frank Dunkin held the job. It is believed that most of the town records, including the bids and plans for the town's water system, were destroyed by Frank Dunkin shortly after he quit

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Continuation sheet Statement of Significance Item number 8 Page 3

the job for the last time. It was reported that J.L. (Pete) Redman was killed in 1926 or 1927 in an auto accident near Clearmont, involving a bootleg delivery.

Marshall Levi Arndt used the old jail many times when he held office in the late 1930's. Once a prisoner of Marshall Arndt's was heard screaming for help when he discovered that a skunk was sharing the bunk with him. In the early 1940's Marshall Ted Wintermute took over the job. During the years of World War II, Tex Ellis was Clearmont's Town Marshall. He was followed for a short time by Carl Sneed. Local law enforcement changed considerably during these years, with the repeal of prohibition.

During the 1950's the old jail in Clearmont was still used frequently by Marshall Bill Campbell, who served for several years until his retirement. The major disturbances were caused by temporary railroad workers who would "go on a drunk and tear around" after payday. Marshall Campbell's son, Cameron, believes that the old jail was an effective deterrent to crime in those days, because it didn't have any modern facilities. Prisoners were taken to a cafe to eat, and back at the jail they were given a can to serve as a toilet.

The Clearmont Jail was used for the last time on the night before Father's Day in June, 1961. Two juveniles were arrested for public intoxication. The arresting officer, Albert Jennings, was the Town Marshall Clearmont had for many years. The boys spent one night in jail and were released in time for church the next day.

An attempt was made by the Town of Clearmont to reinstate the job of Marshall, and Dave Ferguson was hired for a few months in 1975. His duties included the maintenance of the jail, the water works, and other town property, as well as law enforcement. In the few months that Mr. Ferguson was employed, he was called on to investigate several charges of breaking and entering, he detained an escaped thief, and he recovered a stolen gun. He recalls that the job was very enjoyable, and he was well received by the citizens of the town. But the town could only afford a part-time salary, and Mr. Ferguson went elsewhere for a better way of making a living.

At this time, the Town of Clearmont does not employ a marshall, although the Town Council occasionally discusses the need for one. The Clearmont Jail remains in the same condition as when it was last used, an attraction for tourists, who are surprised to see that it is still all there, and an authentic symbol of Clearmont's beginnings.

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Continuation sheet

Addendum

Item number 9

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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4/16/84

Continuation sheet Verbal Boundary Description Item number 10

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The Clearmont Jail is located approximately 15 feet east of the center of Block 5 within the west 50 feet of the dedicated alley known locally as Short Street. The Jail is 12 feet wide by 14 feet 4 inches long and 9 feet high. It sits at the back of the unnumbered lot directly behind the courthouse on an unsurveyed portion of city-owned ground. This rather vague legal description is all that is on file for the Jail house in the Clearmont Courthouse, and because the property belongs to the town and is nontaxable there is no existing legal description for the property on file with the County Clerk or Assessor in Sheridan. For this reason the Wyoming SHPO staff recommends nominating the Jail building as defined by the exterior walls of the structure because the building is a locally important site and stands on city property; additional land area is not necessary to protect it.