

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

JUN 20 1983

DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Historic Resources of (Yellowstone National Park) (Partial Inventory)
Norris Museum/Norris Comfort Station
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Grand Loop Rd.
CITY, TOWN Yellowstone National Park N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE N/A VICINITY OF N/A At Large
CODE COUNTY CODE
Wyoming 065 Park 029

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| <u>Multiple</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resource | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet

CITY, TOWN

Denver

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Colorado**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Yellowstone National Park

STREET & NUMBER

N/A

CITY, TOWN

Yellowstone National Park

STATE

Wyoming**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

List of Classified Structures Survey

DATE

June 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSNational Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" 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

The Norris Museum and Comfort Station nomination is a portion of the Multiple Resource nomination for Yellowstone National Park.

The Norris Museum and Comfort Station are located among Lodgepole pine trees at the south edge of the Norris Geyser Basin and on the south side by the Grand Loop Road approximately 3/4 mile south of Norris Junction. The museum and comfort station are sympathetic to the natural setting. Both buildings have architectural and historical integrity. The museum is used for the function for which it was built; the comfort station is no longer used. A more adequate restroom facility was built in the Norris parking lot.

Museum: Built in 1929, the approximately 94' x 20' building is basically a rectangular plan, oriented east-west. The most prominent feature is a 22' wide and 20' tall foyer through the middle of the building which frames an excellent view of geyser basin. The foyer is covered by a jerkinhead roof. Large logs chosen for their interesting irregularities are used on the trussed roof as rafters, purlins, and king posts. Heavy braced log outlookers, set in masonry, flank the entrance and exit of the building. The one-story, four room frame constructed building is on a buttressed rubblestone foundation which extends 1/3 of the way up the exterior wall. Resting on the masonry is a perimeter of sill logs, above which are frame walls with wood shingle siding. The shingles alternate by courses between 1 1/2" and 9" exposure. The hip roof has exposed large log rafters. The windows are wood casement and plate glass. The wooden door on the west end has large curved shape wrought iron hinges which are distinctive features on the exterior. A masonry view platform faces north over the geyser basin from the far end of the foyer. The museum has a raised terrace with cement floor and buttressed retaining walls. The building retains its architectural and historical integrity. It is in good condition and had log stabilization treatment during the summer of 1981.

Comfort Station: Probably built in the 1930's, the rectangular plan, one-story, two room building has 382 square feet. The log constructed building is on a rubblestone masonry foundation. The floors are cement. The horizontal logs are of a larger size than is commonly found in a building of this size. The logs hewed at the ends, are reverse saddlenotched, and are chinked with split wood. The gable roof has extended log rafters and cedar shingles doubled every course. The exterior finish is varnish over stain. The windows are wood casement. A large closet opening to the outside is located between the building's two rooms. One alteration to the building since its construction was the enclosing of the gable ends, which were formerly open. This alteration does not lessen the architectural integrity of the building. The building is in good condition.

The survey of the Norris Museum and Comfort Station was completed by Lance Williams, a consultant on historic properties, and under the supervision of Supervisory Historical Architect Rodd L. Wheaton during June 1976. Mr. Williams used the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places for his evaluation and the structures were entered on the Rocky Mountain Region's List of Classified Structures Inventory.

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 type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" 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 | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Herbert Maier, Architect
National Park Service

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Norris Museum has local and state significance for both its architecture and its role in education in the National Park System under Criteria A and C. The Norris Comfort Station has local and state significance in architecture under Criteria C.

The building of the Norris Museum as well as the other museums in Yellowstone National Park was the result of an objective of the National Park Service of "equating education with recreation."¹ Shortly after the birth of the National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior, Franklin K. Lane's policy letter dated May 13, 1918, to Stephen Mather, Director of the National Park Service stated, "The educational, as well as the recreational, use of the national parks should be encouraged in every practicable way."² The letter also mentions museums and exhibits. In 1920, Superintendent Horace Albright appointed Milton Skinner the first year-round interpretive naturalist in the National Park Service system. A museum in the former Bachelor Officer's Quarters at Mammoth Hot Springs was established by Skinner in 1921.³ In 1925, National Park Service activities were established at Berkeley California, and in Yosemite National Park. By 1927, the enrichment of the spirit and education were primary objectives of park management. In 1928, with encouragement from Superintendent Horace Albright, the American Museum Association planned a series of trail-side, museums for Yellowstone National Park. The plan was funded by a \$118,000 grant from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Foundation for the development of educational activities in Yellowstone National Park. The plans for Norris Museum were submitted September 3, 1929, and the completed museum was opened to the public July 5, 1930. The educational program for Yellowstone was directed by naturalist, Dorr G. Yeager, from the Yosemite School of Field National History.

Norris Museum and the other Yellowstone museums are excellent examples of Rustic Architecture which the National Park Service mastered during the 1920's, 1930's, and up to 1942. The architect for the American Association of Museums Herbert Maier designed the museums in Yellowstone. He previously designed the museums in Yosemite and Grand Canyon National Parks. Each museum in Yellowstone was designed for its unique site and purpose. Norris Museum was designed for the interpretation and exhibit of thermal geology in the west wing and the east wing was entirely devoted to twelve cases displaying the area's birds. Norris Museum is a good representation of constructing a building without disrupting the natural scene and it exemplifies the pre-World War II National Park Service philosophy of non-intrusive design which is defined by the following concepts:

1. Buildings were to seek harmony with their physical setting through sensitive use of native and planted vegetation and through the incorporation of natural colors into the building's exterior.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 12 523300 4952360
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D _____
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The trapezoidal shape nominated area includes only the Norris Museum and Comfort Station. Point A begins 25' southeast from the southeast corner of the Comfort Station to Point B which is 25' south from the southwest corner of the Comfort Station to Point C 87' northwest from the northwest corner of the west wing of the museum to Point D 50' northeast of the northeast corner of the central portion of the museum then back 200' to Point A.

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary Shivers Culpin, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet

CITY OR TOWN

Denver

DATE

November 11, 1982

TELEPHONE

(303) 234-2764

STATE

Colorado

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Alvin J. Bastron

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Quinn B. Brown

TITLE

DATE

6-14-83

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the
National Register

DATE

7/21/83

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

2. Stones, logs, and other construction members must be carefully proportioned to the natural setting, that is natural materials should be similar in size to their natural correspondents.
3. Vertical emphasis was to be avoided, especially in the form of large, imposing roofs, whose smooth surfaces could demand attention to any unseemly degree.
4. Regularity of rock size or use of natural materials which are too unblemished or too processed should be avoided.
5. Irregular roof lines were generally preferable to the precision of straight lines.
6. Rustic structures were to achieve thematic harmony with other buildings in the same park or vicinity.⁴

Subsequent to the Yellowstone projects, Herbert Maier influenced state parks with rustic design as head of District III (which ranged from the Gulf Coast of Texas to the Dakotas) of the National Park Service Emergency Conservation Work. In fact, his protege, Cecil Doty designed a museum for Custer State Park, South Dakota, which bears a resemblance to Herbert Maier's Norris Museum.⁵

The Norris Comfort Station was also designed to be in harmony with the natural setting. It is a typical design and with some slight variations, the plan is found in other areas of Yellowstone and other western parks.

The other three museums built at Yellowstone were Fishing Bridge Museum, Madison Museum, and the Old Faithful Museum. The Old Faithful Museum which was associated with thermal geology has been demolished; Fishing Bridge Museum focuses on ecology of the Yellowstone Lake area, and it was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places November 5, 1981. Madison Museum which focuses on the history of Yellowstone National Park was entered on the National Register of Historic Places July 9, 1982.

1. Haines, Aubrey. The Yellowstone Story Vol. II. Boulder, Colorado: Colorado University Associated Press, 1977.
2. Manns, Timothy. Unpublished Historical Research. Yellowstone National Park. December 1982.
3. Ibid
4. Tweed, William C., Soullier, Laura, and Law, Henry. National Park Service. Rustic Architecture 1919-1942. Western Regional Office, National Park Service, February 1977. pp. 93-94.

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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

5. Unpublished manuscript. Tweed, William C. "Parkitecture: Rustic Architecture in the National Parks." National Park Service, p. 101.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

CONTINUATION SHEET REFERENCES ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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Good, Albert. Park and Recreation Structures. Part I. Administration and Basic Service Facilities. National Park Service, 1938.

Haines, Aubrey. The Yellowstone Story. Vol. II. Boulder, Colorado: Colorado University Associated Press, 1977.

Manns, Timothy. Unpublished Historical Research. Yellowstone Park Archives. Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. December 1982.

Tweed, William, Soullier, Laura, and Law, Henry. National Park Service. Rustic Architecture. 1916-1942. Western Regional Office. National Park Service, February 1977.

Unpublished Manuscript. Tweed William C., "Parkitecture: Rustic Architecture In The Parks," Western Regional Office. National Park Service. San Francisco, CA. February 1977.