

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 APR 17 1987
DATE ENTERED MAY 22 1987

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Greybull Main Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Greybull Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

401 Greybull Avenue

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Greybull

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

NA VICINITY OF

NA

STATE

Wyoming 82426

CODE
056

COUNTY

Big Horn

CODE

003

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED NA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)

United States Postal Service, Western Regional Headquarters

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

California 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Big Horn County Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 109

CITY, TOWN

Basin

STATE

Wyoming 82410

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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 <u>NA</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Greybull Main Post Office is a buff-colored brick building on a raised concrete basement. The front facade is symmetrical, divided into five bays and is devoid of significant detailing. A centered entry bay with two equally sized windows bays (all flat-arched) on either side break the otherwise plain facade. Granite steps and landing, flanked by square limestone buttresses, provide access to the double-door entry. Above the doors is a nine-light transom window fronted by an ornate brass grille in which a low-relief sculpted eagle is centered. A plain limestone frieze with slightly projecting molded cornice completes the facade. The roof is flat, built-up tar composition.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Greybull Post Office is one story in height and symmetrical in elevation. The basement is constructed of concrete. The first floor is constructed of brick with limestone trim. The main entry stairs are granite.

The front facade (north) is flat and divided into five equally spaced flat-arched bays. The main entry bay is centered and flanked on each side by two window bays. The entry bay is slightly recessed from the brick-faced facade and framed in wood. The entry consists of double aluminum (anodized) framed glass doors topped by a 9-light transom window which rests atop a plain wooden door head. An ornate brass grille, in which a flat relief sculpted eagle is centered, is set in front of the transom window. Granite steps and landing, flanked by square limestone buttresses, provide access to the entry bay. Single free-standing lanterns in a torch motif rest atop each of the buttresses.

The window bays are identical to each other and of the same dimension as the entry bay. The bays consist of triple-hung 6-light windows of wood sash which are set above a plain limestone panel. The panel is slightly

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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SPECIFIC DATES | Site Acquisition - 1937 | BUILDER/ARCHITECT | Federal Government/Louis A. Simon |
| | Building Completed - 1939 | | OSA |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Though not yet 50 years old, the Greybull Post Office is of exceptional significance on the local level. As one of only five properties in the State of Wyoming that contain public artwork commissioned by the Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture during the Depression era, the building carries a strong association with the federal programs designed to provide economic relief. The artwork, which depicts a group of cattle drovers singing in front of the chuck wagon, is an example of the American Regionalism fostered by the Section during the New Deal. The building itself is locally significant in its symbolism of the federal presence and the massive public works programs that were initiated to aid small communities during a period of national economic emergency. Both the mural and the building exemplify the link between the federal government and the community.

ART

According to Dieterich and Petravage in their article on New Deal Art in Wyoming, the federal art programs found little on which to build in Wyoming. There were few professional artists and not much interest in the tradition they represented. The first of the programs to be established in Wyoming, the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) undertook three projects in the state which included two works in the McCormick Junior High School and the dome of the State Capitol in Cheyenne. After the demise of the PWAP program in April, 1934, the Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP) was established in July, 1935. Intended to shift artists from local relief rolls to projects involving the decoration of federal buildings, the program had little impact in Wyoming. No artists needing support in Wyoming could be identified. The program was terminated in 1938.

It was the Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture that was established in the fall of 1934

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. "Big Horn County Towns", WPA MS#1212 (Cheyenne, Wyoming; State Archives, Museums and Historical Department)
2. "Big Horn's Progressive Towns", The Midwest Review, February 1926, pp. 20-26.
3. Dietrich H.R. and Jacqueline Petravage, "New Deal Art in Wyoming: Some Case Studies", Annals of Wyoming, Spring 1973 pp. 54-67.
4. Greybull Post Office, Floor and Construction Plans, 1938.
5. Greybull Standard and Tribune, various articles, 1937-1939.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.48

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| A | 1,2 | 73,4 | 4,0,0 | 4,9 | 3,0 | 1,6,0 | B | | | | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | D | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots, 1-6, Block 2, 1st addition.

The site is rectangular with 150 feet of frontage along Greybull Avenue (northern boundary) and a depth of 140 feet with frontage along South Fourth Street (eastern boundary).

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

| | | | |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
| NA | NA | NA | NA |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
| NA | NA | NA | NA |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

H. J. "Jim" Kolva, Senior Associate

ORGANIZATION

Institute for Urban and Local Studies

DATE

April 1986

STREET & NUMBER

W. 705 1st Avenue

TELEPHONE

(509) 458-6219

CITY OR TOWN

Spokane

STATE

WA 99204

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

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 State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

John S. Jensen

DATE

2-9-87

TITLE
Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

see sheet for signature

DATE

MAY 22 1987

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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recessed and rests on the limestone facing of the raised basement wall. A plain limestone frieze extends across the facade between the line marking the tops of the bays to a plain, slightly projecting limestone cornice. "United States Post Office, Greybull, Wyoming" is carved into the frieze and centered on the entry.

The west facade is flat and divided into four equally spaced window bays. The window bays are identical in design and detail as those of the front facade. Limestone is used to face the exposed basement wall, frieze above the window bays, and cornice. Brick is used for the remainder of the facade facing. The treatment is identical to that of the front facade.

The east facade is essentially identical to the west facade. It differs in the following manner: one window bay is filled with brick (original construction), and one small single light window flanks each side of the bricked-in window. Also, the upper third portion of the southern-most window has been replaced by a wooden panel which houses an air vent.

The rear facade is similar in design to and use of material as the front. However, the four window bays are closer together and the loading platform replaces the entry. The loading platform is slightly offset from the center of the building and projects to the rear. A flat metal roof projects over the loading area to the east. The west and south walls of the platform are brick resting on a concrete platform. The east wall is open and is the side used for loading. The roof is flat built-up tar composition with limestone coping atop the walls.

A mural entitled "Chuck Wagon Serenade" (approximately 12 feet by 6 feet) is located on the east wall of the lobby, over the postmaster's door. It was executed in oil on canvas by Manuel A. Bromberg in 1940 for a sum of \$840. The mural depicts cattle drovers singing after an evening meal at the chuck wagon.

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(renamed Section of Fine Arts in 1938) under which the Greybull mural and five other works were completed in Kemmerer, Powell, Riverton, Worland and Yellowstone Post Offices. The Section, which was administered in Washington, dealt directly with the artists, and selected artists through national and regional design competition. The Section sought the best decorative art that it could find for designated federal buildings. The intent of the program's administrators was that the work would reflect the themes and styles of the American scene, with a hope that it would strike a responsive chord in the general public. Although the program is attributed with having fostered an American Regionalism, art critics could never find a coherent body of work that was truly Regionalist or representative of particular sections of the country. The work that was created did, however, portray the American Scene in the form of localized subject matter. Further, the work resulting from the programs tended to pursue an inoffensive middle ground of style and content which was sometimes viewed as producing limp platitudes rather than strong statements. This resulted from the requirement for final approval from Washington as well as compliance with local preferences. The strife or dark side of the Depression was not portrayed, but instead the nostalgic and positive events of the American Scene were depicted.

The Greybull mural, "Chuck Wagon Serenade", by Manuel Bromberg, was selected in a national competition in June, 1939 from which 48 paintings were selected. A Life magazine of December 4, 1939 carried a short article and photos of the selected murals. According to the article, the homes of the murals would be mostly in village post offices and produced for rural Americans. They represented the collective tastes of the community together with the individual taste of the artist.

The collective tastes of the Greybull community, however, came in the form of exception. An article in the Greybull Standard and Tribune of December 7th, reported that current discussions among patrons of the

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new post office indicated that the selected mural design was not wanted. Letters of protest came from the Lions Club and Greybull Club. Exceptions were taken with the peculiar looking individuals supposed to be cowboys, the background of rather uncertain description, and the lack of feeling. Bromberg refined his original design so as to tailor it to the Wyoming locale and to ensure its authenticity. When completed, Edwin B. Rowan, Assistant Chief of the Section of Fine Arts, congratulated Bromberg on his final effort and commented: "The work seems to us authentic in feeling, beautiful in painting quality, vital in design and distinctive in mood." (correspondence Rowan to Bromberg, August 22, 1940). After the mural's installation on September 4, 1940, Bromberg reported that the postmaster was delighted with the work and that the citizens at large appeared to be more than satisfied.

The Greybull Post Office is significant under Criterion A for its historic association with the federal Government's New Deal public arts programs. The mural is also significant under Criterion C as an integral part of a building that represents a significant type, period, and style of artistic expression. Finally, the building is eligible under Criterion D because of its information potential relating to artistic expression and techniques of the period and the social history of its locality.

Mr. Bromberg studied at the Cleveland School of Art. Previous to the Greybull Post Office commission, he had been commissioned for a work at the 1939 World's Fair and invited to the 1940 Whitney Annual. In 1943, the War Department selected him to go to an active war theater and obtain a graphic record of war. After the war, he received a Guggenheim Fellowship; was head of the Salem College Art Department; and in 1949 was an associate professor at North Carolina State College. He has exhibited in major galleries and museums throughout the nation and the world. He is presently professor of painting, New York State University, New Paltz, New York.

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POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

As Greybull's first and only federally constructed post office, the building is locally significant under Criterion A. It represented the link between the federal government and the local community, and acted as both a symbol and an agency of the federal government. The building further symbolized the massive public building programs of the 1930s which were intended to assist local communities during a period of national economic emergency. Local press coverage of the progress of the building's completion was extensive and community interest was high. The dedication of the post office also afforded the citizens of Greybull the opportunity to hear the words of their elected representative in Washington, Senator Joseph O'Malley in his congratulatory address.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Greybull with a 1980 population of 2,377 is the local center for mineral and agricultural production in Big Horn County. Located in northwestern Wyoming, the local economy is also based on retail and wholesale trade, and tourism.

Greybull was among the earliest sites in the state for the production of oil and natural gas, and had producing wells in the area as early as 1888. The first permanent settlement in Greybull came in 1905. A townsite of 40 acres was surveyed in the fall of 1906 and lots were sold in 1907. The first post office, with Roy Shaver as postmaster, was established on March 7, 1907. Incorporation of the new town took place in 1909 and in the following year 258 people called Greybull home. Greybull boomed between 1910 and 1920 as a result of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad selecting the city as a division point, and from the production and refining of oil. As the location of the Standard and Midwest refineries, the economic stability of the young city was assured and by 1920 the population boomed to 2,377. The gradual decline in oil production, commencing in 1923 and

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reaching a low in 1933, and the general depression of the agricultural economy, reversed the boom of the previous decade. In 1930, Greybull's population declined to 1,806. Although the decade of the 1930s was one of minimal growth, at least the population decline stopped and actually increased by 22 to 1,828 by 1940. The next two decades population increased to 2,262 in 1950 and 2,286 in 1960.

LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GREYBULL POST OFFICE

The construction of the Greybull Post Office was reported in the Greybull Standard and Tribune between 1937 and 1939. During this period, the City of Greybull was experiencing a period of prosperity and recovering from the economic downturn of the 1920s which resulted from a reversal of the oil boom of the previous decade. Several major new structures were completed which included a new high school (PWA project); new service stations; telephone office; Elks Building; Wyoming Gas Building; and highway viaduct. Rural electrification was also reaching the area; the city was improving its water system (under a PWA grant); and the Sunshine Dam project was approved under the PWA program to provide a domestic water source to the city.

On September 16, 1937, it was announced that Greybull had been given the approval for a new post office in telegrams from Senators Schwartz and O'Malley. On October 28th, it was reported that a site had been selected for the new post office. A joint committee of the Post Office and Treasury departments selected six lots south of the Big Horn Co-op Service Station. The completion of the survey was reported on November 18th. A December 30th article reported that building activity in Greybull had set a new record. More than \$300,000 had been spent on new construction in 1937, and it was claimed as "one of the biggest booms in the history of the city."

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Several months elapsed before the post office again made the news. In a September 22, 1938 article, it was reported that title had been cleared and that construction would soon follow. The October 13th issue of the Tribune carried the following headlines: "Government Asks Bids on Greybull Post Office". The old bandstand which occupied the site had been removed the previous week. Headlines announcing "Contract is Let on Greybull's New Post Office" greeted local readers on November 17th. Busboom and Rauh of Salina, Kansas with a bid of \$56,760 received the contract to construct the building.

Soon after the new year, 1939, opened, the Tribune's January 12th headlines carried the news that "Work Begins on Greybull's New Post Office". Excavation would commence in a few days.

On March 16th, another headline article reported that the basement had been excavated and that the concrete would soon be poured. The post office work force was tripled, according to an April 13th article, in order to allow around-the-clock concrete pouring. Work progressed and the upcoming cornerstone ceremony was announced on June 29th. The Mason's would preside over the ceremony which was scheduled for July 15th. Several months of construction activity elapsed and the building neared completion. On November 23rd, the Tribune advised its local readers that the dedication ceremony would be held the following week. The headlines of November 30th announced "Greybull Dedicates Post Office and Viaduct Today". As reported in the article, "This was a big day for Greybull". With postmaster Fred Chamberlin presiding, the main address was given by Senator Joseph C. O'Malley. In his address, O'Malley talked of the link between the local community and the federal government that was provided by the building. Further, "The post office..., is a symbol and an agency of the government designed to serve the people of the community." He also complimented the people for having been granted this fine structure and noted that it was another mark of progress.

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