

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 20 1987

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Bats Grocery Store

and/or common Whalen's Super Market

2. Location

street & number 4336 Clayton Street

n/a not for publication

city, town Denver

n/a vicinity of

state Colorado

code CO

county Denver

code 031

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	n/a agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Douglas Smith

street & number 4336 Clayton

city, town Denver

n/a vicinity of

state Colorado 80216

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City and County Building - Denver County Courthouse

street & number Bannock Street

city, town Denver

state Colorado

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Ongoing  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society, 1300 Broadway

city, town Denver

state Colorado

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" 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 date _____ N/A _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

Bats Grocery Store building, constructed in 1903, is a detached one story building 22' x 45'1", situated in a 20th century mixed residential and industrial neighborhood called Swansea, in the City and County of Denver. The building is located at 4336 Clayton Street in the middle of a residential block. Houses in the area are small one story brick and wooden buildings dating from the late 19th century. The one story, rectangular former grocery is of soft brick and wood frame construction with a flat roof, gently sloped from front to rear of the building and has a traditional storefront.

The building is situated on 1 lot with 2 vacant lots to the south. There is a 19th century wrought-iron fence across the front of the property on each side of the building. Immediately north of the grocery is a small Victorian style home, (not part of this nomination), which was the former home of the original grocery store proprietors, Andrew and Hannah Bats.

The west front of the grocery building is set flush with the sidewalk. There are display windows on either side of the recessed double-door entrance. There is a transom over the entrance and clerestories over the display windows. Under each of the large display windows, where the paneled kickplates are usually found, there were four small window panes that are now boarded over. The original entrance doors each have an oblong opening with safety glass installed in 1981. The thermopane glass in the display windows was also installed in 1981. The transom over the front doors was lowered about 6" to install anodized aluminum storm doors to replace the deteriorated wood screen doors. The handle from the replaced wood screen doors is now a towel rack on the bathroom door and bears an advertisement reading "Rainbo is Good Bread."

The north side of the building has three wood sash, rectangular, 1 x 1 windows and the south side has two, 1 x 1 and two small segmental arched windows. The east rear has two windows and a rear entry door. The building underwent renovation beginning in 1980 with assistance in 1984 from a Federal Deferred Loan Program. The work included: new roofing, tuck-pointing around the entire building, restoration of two wood sash windows near the southeast corner and interior work. The original room configurations were maintained and now include a large front room, a bedroom and kitchen in the middle portion of the building and a bedroom and bath on either side of a hallway at the rear. The plaster ceilings were removed in order to install insulation. They were leveled using 2 x 4's, insulated and Sheetrocked. This lowered the height of the original ceilings less than six inches. The original height in the front part of the building was ten feet and 9½ feet at the rear. A sink, cabinets and counters were installed in the kitchen. The large front room, 18' x 22', was originally used as the store proper and contained pine shelving about 7½ feet high on the north, east and south walls.

These shelves were all that remained of the original store fixtures and were removed during renovation and used as floorboards in the back bedroom and hallway. The original floor of the front room was tongue and groove yellow pine, painted grey,

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and was quite worn in places. It is now covered with tongue and groove maple flooring which the owner salvaged from warehouses being converted to office space at 1730 Blake Street and at 1610 Wynkoop Street in Denver.

There is a trap door in the floor of the front room leading down into a dirt floor cellar, which is the size of the front room above and is just under 6 feet in height. A non-original forced air gas furnace stands in the southeast corner of this cellar. The present kitchen, formerly a bedroom, has an elevated floor 6½ inches high, raised in order to accomodate heating ducts running under the flooring.

At the rear of the property along the alley stands a two story wood frame and soft brick stable, with hayloft, built between 1903-1904, and an attached one story brick garage. Here, the original proprietors, Andrew and Hannah Bats, housed the horse and buggy used to deliver groceries. On the east, or alley side of the stables, are a set of wooden double-doors at ground level and a wide single wooden door directly above, where hay for the horses was hoisted up for storage in the hayloft. A small window is set in the northeast corner on the alley side and there are four very small square windows along the north wall. The west side of the stables has a single entry door in the northwest corner, a tall window on the second story level and a set of wooden double doors at ground level placed directly opposite the double doors on the east side.

The interior of the stable has a wooden floor at the second story level, accessible by a narrow opening between the floor joists, where a ladder had been nailed to the north wall. The floor joists have deteriorated due to moisture leaking from the roof. The ground floor of the stable is covered with thick wooden planks, commonly used for stable floors.

Built at a later date, also of wood frame and soft brick construction, is a one story garage, which is attached to the south side of the stable. A door once connected the two buildings but was bricked up some time prior to 1980. A tall vertical window on the south side of the garage is also bricked up. The entire structure measures 33'6" x 17'1" and is set flush with the unpaved alley at the rear of the building. The garage section of the building has large wooden double doors on the west side of the structure. Former double doors on the east alley side have been boarded up and a cement skirt placed along the bottom. The roofs of the stable and garage are flat, gently sloping, covered with rolled roofing and are both in deteriorating condition. Both the stable and garage are now used for storage of wood and various building materials. The bricks along the parapets have eroded and several sections of the exterior walls have been reinforced with a concrete skirt to cover deteriorated bricks. The stable and attached garage are considered as a single contributing building. With the grocery store, there are two contributing buildings on the site.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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** 1903-1935 **Builder/Architect** H. C. Donneker & Company

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Bats Grocery Store meets criterion C as a significant property type, an early 20th century small neighborhood grocery store. The store is an early Twentieth Century Commercial Style structure which was built in 1903, by H. C. Donneker & Co. It retains the elements which characterize this style such as decorative brick cornice, a recessed front entrance and storefront display windows with clerestories. Intact examples of these small neighborhood commercial buildings are becoming more rare since the advent of the large supermarkets. The building also meets criterion A because these small grocery store buildings were associated with the growth of Denver's residential neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Bats Grocery Store served the residents of the once thriving Denver neighborhood of Swansea until 1935.

Bats Grocery Store meets criterion A for its association with the growth of Swansea, a Denver residential neighborhood, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Swansea, a subdivision of Denver, was founded in 1869 when the Swansea Smelting Works opened and began processing ore brought by rail on the Kansas and Pacific Railroad. The smelter was patterned after those in Swansea, Wales, and after a model built in Blackhawk, Colorado by Nathaniel P. Hill.<sup>1</sup>

The boundaries of Swansea roughly run along 52nd Avenue and Vasquez Boulevard on the north, 40th Avenue on the south, 38th Street and along the Platte River on the west and Colorado Boulevard on the east.

The smaller neighborhoods of Globeville and Elyria are adjacent to Swansea. Early settlers of the Swansea area were Welsh, Slovenians, Croations, Russians, Poles and Germans. Many of the early residents worked for the Swansea Smelting Works, as well as for the railroads.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment of Armour, Swiss and Cudahy meat processing plants added to the commercial importance of this area of Denver. Globeville and Elyria each had small grocery stores in their neighborhoods, although the few that remain today are not as architecturally intact as Bats Grocery.

Andrew and Hannah Bats were the original owners and proprietors of Bats Grocery Store. They moved their grocery business from 4431 Thompson Court, one block away, after construction of this building in 1903. The contractor was H. C. Donneker & Co. The former grocery on Thompson Court now serves as a day-care center and has been altered on the exterior. The Bats lived in a small Victorian style house at 4338 Clayton

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property under one acre

Quadrangle name Commerce City

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	3	5	0	3	9	9	0	4	4	0	2	7	9	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

Lots 6, 7 and 8, Block 15, Town of Swansea.  
The boundary includes the city lots historically associated with the property.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mr. Douglas R. Smith

organization N/A date September 15, 1987

street & number 4336 Clayton Street telephone (303) 295-3278

city or town Denver state Colorado

# 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 Barbara Sudler

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12-21-87

### For NPS use only

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

for the National Register date 1-28-88  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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next door to the new grocery store. They operated the grocery store there until 1935 when Mr. Bats died. Mrs. Bats continued to run the grocery through 1935 and continued to live at 4338 Clayton Street. The store was vacant from 1936 to 1937. In 1938, Witt S. and Helen O. Harrison leased the grocery store from Mrs. Bats, but it again became vacant in 1939. Joseph A. and Dora C. Schnabel operated the store from 1940 through 1941.

Edward and Grace Whalen began proprietorship of the store a few months before the outbreak of World War II, and named it Whalen's Super Market. While Mrs. Whalen operated the store, Mr. Whalen traveled on the road selling pharmaceuticals for Gibson Products Company. Gasoline rationing, shortly after the outbreak of World War II, forced him to leave this position and work full time with his wife at the grocery store. Mr. Whalen, a native of Leadville, Colorado, had previously learned the grocery business in that community while working for Cummings Brothers Grocery Store. He drove a horse-drawn wagon delivering groceries to the citizens of Leadville. Mr. and Mrs. Whalen raised twelve children, who at various times helped out at the grocery by doing chores.<sup>3</sup>

When Edward and Grace Whalen rented the building from Mrs. Bats, and changed its name from Bats Grocery to Whalen's Super Market, it was operated from 1942 to 1951 as a "super market," until they moved their inventory into a building located at 4301 Clayton Street. They used this building, Bats Grocery, for storing stock for their new store. When Mrs. Bats died in 1953, the Whalens purchased the old Bats Grocery Store and Mrs. Bats' house. In 1980, the Bats Grocery Store, which had been vacant since the mid 1960s was purchased from Edward and Grace Whalen by the current owner.

The neighborhood grocery store was an essential part of each community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and many dotted the environs of Denver.<sup>4</sup>

Bats Grocery was a vital part of the commercial development of the Town of Swansea. Residents in the immediate neighborhood were dependent on the store for daily supplies of fresh milk, eggs, meat and produce, as well as canned goods, household items and penny candy for the children.

The Whalens purchased wholesale, fresh produce and eggs directly from the Denargo Market on Brighton Boulevard. Fresh meat was delivered by Joe Sigfried from suppliers on Brighton Boulevard. A walk-in freezer installed in the grocery store, allowed Mr. Whalen to purchase whole sides of beef, which he then cut for storage in the freezer.

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Workers from the railroads, Nabisco, The Farmer's Marketing Association, were all customers of Bats Grocery. In the early days, when the Bats were proprietors, some customers paid their grocery bills with gold. The Whalens extended credit to some of their customers, who paid their bills once a month when they received payroll checks.<sup>5</sup>

The advent of large supermarkets in the 1950s along with an increasingly mobile society, contributed to the demise of the neighborhood grocery, which bore no resemblance to the convenience stores of today.

The small neighborhood grocery store was a community institution where news and information were as available as milk and eggs. There, customers were greeted by name and often a line of credit was established with a handshake. That era has all but passed and Bats Grocery "The Biggest Little Store in Swansea" still stands as a reminder of that era.<sup>6</sup>

Bats Grocery meets criterion C because it typifies the small neighborhood grocery store built in the Twentieth Century Commercial style and because it retains the essential elements of that style. According to A Guide to Colorado Architecture, Twentieth Century Commercial style buildings are: one to five stories in height with flat or slightly pitched roofs. These buildings have very little ornamentation other than some decorative brickwork along the cornice line or a parapet. Some of these buildings retain elements of the 19th century commercial structures, particularly recessed entrances, clerestories, and transom windows.<sup>7</sup> Elements of the style seen on the Bats Grocery are the display windows with clerestories, the corbelled brick cornice, and the recessed entrance with transoms.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Smiley's History of Denver, p.251.
2. Denver Post, June 5, 1978, p.27.
3. Based on interviews with Edward and Grace Whalen, former owners of Whalen's Super Market by present owner of building, March 1986.
4. There are a few small grocery stores operating in various Denver neighborhoods. One excellent example listed in the National Register of Historic Places is the A. P. Cerrone Grocery at 3617 Osage in North Denver. In the Globeville/Swansea neighborhood, one grocery of particular interest is Westerkamp Grocery at 5106 Washington Street. Noted for its fresh quality meats, most of its business is done by phone. Orders are then delivered all over the metropolitan area of Denver. Architecturally the exterior has been altered and the building no longer retains its original integrity. Also in this area are several commercial style buildings which may have been small grocery stores but are now vacant and boarded over. 46th and Josephine and 45th and Sherman Street are two examples.
5. Whalen interview.
6. As advertised on 1945 calendar found in store by present owner, Douglas Smith.
7. Sarah J. Pearce and Merrill Wilson, A Guide to Colorado Architecture, (Denver, Colorado Historical Society, 1983), p. 71.