

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received SEP 10 1986

date entered

OCT 10 1986

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

1. Name

historic John S. Evans Hotel: Mountain View Hotel: Grandview Hotel

and/or common Elk Mountain Hotel (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Bridge Street and County Road 402 not for publication

city, town Elk Mountain vicinity of

state Wyoming code 056 county Carbon code 007

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name C.H. and S.P. Martin

street & number Elk Mountain Hotel Box 76

city, town Elk Mountain vicinity of state Wyoming

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Carbon County Courthouse

street & number 4th and Spruce

city, town Rawlins state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title University of Wyo. History Class has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Cheyenne state Wyoming

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input 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 <u>n/a</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located on their original sites on the eastern side of the community, the Elk Mountain Hotel and Garden Spot Pavilion are physically separated by a tree filled grassy area that has long functioned as the town's park. As a focal point in this town of 350 residents, the two story hotel and large one story dance hall are among the largest and most important buildings in town. The town takes its name from nearby Elk Mountain (7 miles southwest), a massive and picturesque orogenic formation rising to a height of 11000 feet. The mountain, the northernmost extension of the Medicine Bow Range, overlooks the mineral rich and wind swept Hanna Basin and provides some protection for the small Elk Mountain community from the ravages of weather. The town features an evenly spaced grid of small homes, a community church and mercantile, most of which are of recent construction. Within this context the hotel and pavilion are significant cultural resources reflecting historical associations and embodying important social and economic contributions to community life.

The Elk Mountain Hotel was constructed in 1905 on property previously used for an Overland Stage Station, local saloon and community post office. The building incorporates many features of the Folk Victorian style of architecture found on the Frontier (see McAlester and McAlester, 308-317). It is a two story, front-gabled roof, wood frame building with a stone foundation. The building's facade is symmetrical, its outline is rectangular and it features centrally located single gabled attic dormers on each roof side. The facade of the buildings, facing the south and County Road 402 (the old Overland Trail), has three bays demarcated by 1/1 double hung sash windows with plain surrounds flanking upper and lower story doorways at the center of the facade. The bottom story main entrance (at present not in use) features a paneled door incorporating a 2/3 lighted segment on the door's upper third. A long side light is located to the right of the door. Entrance from the building's second story onto the upper part of the two tiered porch is arranged similarly as the first story entrance. The facade gable incorporates a plain surround 1/1 double hung sash window flanked by single paned side lights. The full facade double tiered porch features rough hewn support columns with turned spindle rail supports along the porch balustrade.

The building's east side elevation features an enclosed shed roofed entranceway (at this time the principal entrance into the building) within which the original balustraded porch entrance has been incorporated fully intact. The side elevations are piled five deep and the simple surround 1/1 double hung sash window pattern is retained. A stuccoed chimney rises along the east elevation and a second chimney rises from the central height of the gable roof on the building's northern portion. A hipped roof building extension (date of construction unknown) with hipped roof dormer is attached to the rectangular main structure on the building's rear elevation. A small

See Addendum

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1905-1946 **Builder/Architect** John S. Evans

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The historic significance of the Elk Mountain Hotel and Garden Spot Pavilion lies within three areas: the development of permanent settlement in the region, the evolution of local commerce (logging, mining and recreation) and the embodiment of architectural qualities creating a sense of permanence in the local community during its formative years. All three areas add significant asociational qualities to the Elk Mountain Hotel and Garden Spot Pavilion as a property. Since it was the only hotel with accomodations in a fifty mile radius, the Elk Mountain Hotel was an important waystation for the entrepenuers and laborers who integrated this region into the mainstream of Wyoming's economic development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The buildings also derive significance through their association with the local community by serving as a dance hall, meeting place and club house for various local societies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Lastly, the buildings represent excellent examples of frontier commercial architecture that formed the nexus between the settled regions of the nation and the frontier environs, lending a degree of permanence to nascent communities. The property therefore is related to important events and themes in history (i.e. frontier commerce and economic development) and represents a significant and distinguishable architectural entity within its local context. Significance criteria A and C are most applicable to this property.

Proceeding the evolution of all other themes in relation to these properties was the development of the transportation networks and accompanying services in close proximity to their Hotel's present location. Fur trader and explorer William Ashley's exploration in 1824-5 was the first well-recorded Anglo-American intrusion into the Medicine Bow River region (Thybonny et al, 34). The Medicine Bow River crossing was used by the John C. Fremont expedition of 1843. On August 2 of that year Fremont's party camped in the proximity of "Medicine Butte", an early name for Elk Mountain, near the stream course which would become a major crossing in later years for emigrant and stage travel. The successful travels of two small emigrant parties, lead by Evans and Jones (1849) over the course of what later became the Overland Trail lead to the further exploration of this route by Army Captain Howard Stansbury in 1850. In the fall of that year Stansbury, led by famed mountain man Jim Bridger, crossed north of the Medicine Bows towards the Laramie Plains (Thybonny et al, 38). In 1856 Lt. F.T. Bryan, following Stansbury's route, surveyed the area to ascertain its possibilities for wagon travel. He found evidence of continual use by travelers on route even at this early date (ibid., 40). The development of the Overland Trail was primarily dependent on the formation of the Overland Stage Line by entrepenuer Ben Holliday. By 1862 the smooth operation of the line was imperiled by constant Indian attacks along the North Platte River. Holliday chose to move the line southward, crossing the Medicine Bow River, and thus brought the camping location of many

See Addendum

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Addendum

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1/2 mile / 2.5 acres

Quadrangle name Elk Mountain

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1 1 3	3 8 1 2	4 1 6 0	4 6	1 5	7 6 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

B	1 3	3 8 1 2	4 1 4 0	4 6	1 1 5	8 1 2 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

C	1 1 3	3 8 1 2	5 1 2 0	4 6	1 1 5	8 4 0
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D	1 1 3	3 8 1 2	6 1 1 0	4 6	1 1 5	9 1 2 0
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E	1 1 3	3 8 1 2	6 6 0	4 6	1 1 5	8 1 8 0
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F	1 1 3	3 8 1 2	6 1 0 0	4 6	1 1 5	8 1 0 0
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G						
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H						
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Verbal boundary description and justification

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
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title C.H. and Z.P. Martin/owners, SBW and Hugh Davidson-SHPO staff

organization Elk Mountain Hotel

date March 28, 1985

street & number Box 76

telephone (307) 348-7774

city or town Elk Mountain

state Wyoming

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

Robert D. Bush

title Director and State Historic Preservation Officer

date Sept. 5, 1986

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

[Signature]

date 10/10/86

Keeper of the National Register

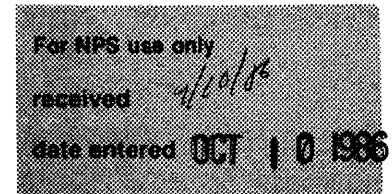
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 7 Page 1

shed roofed addition is attached to this hipped roof extension on its eastern and northern side and is clad with weatherboard and lighted with modern metal framed sliding windows. The original Hotel building featured cedar shiplap siding which was covered with asbestos in 1948 as a means of insulating the building. As maintenance of the siding is required the present owners are replacing the asbestos with clapboard.

The interior of the Hotel building retains its original appearance with a pressed tin ceiling, an oak staircase, Douglas fir decorative moldings on interior window and door frames, and glass fronted cabinets, beaded wainscoting (presently covered but intact) and turned spindle columns decorating the Hotel's dining room and kitchen. The bottom story plan includes the kitchen and storage areas (northernmost extension), a knotty pine bar and adjacent dining room, a lobby and side office and a small foyer immediately behind the main facade entranceway and in front of the staircase leading to the second floor. The second story includes the Hotel's 16 rooms and three bathrooms which flank a long hallway running the length of the building's second story. Though modern conveniences have been added to the kitchen and upstairs bathrooms, many of the Hotel's original elements remain intact. For instance, the upstairs hall and rooms are paneled with knotty pine and are filled with authentic period antiques. Retaining a high degree of integrity of setting, design, location, workmanship, feeling and association, the Hotel continues to function in its original capacity.

The Garden Spot Pavilion (a name given the dance hall by its owners in the 40s), is approximately 100 meters northeast of the Hotel and was constructed in two phases. The first construction on this building dates to 1880 when John S. Jones built the southern portion of the building as a dance hall. Jones had already constructed a saloon and parlor nearby to serve the Elk Mountain community. This latter building is now severely altered and deteriorating and is not included within the nomination. The second phase of construction added a substantial extension to the older portion of the dance hall building. John Evans added this larger extension in 1920.

The older portion of the Garden Spot Pavilion is an east facing rectangular one story building. It has vertical board and batten wood cladding lies above a tabular sandstone foundation. A false front facade is presently covered with rolled imitation brick asphalt sheathing. The name plate above the door identifies the building as the "Famous Garden Spot Pavilion". A double door entrance and double hung sash windows with a 6/6 lighting pattern flank the entrance. This simple board and batten structure served as an informal social center for the dispersed Elk Mountain community beginning in 1880. The building embodies the free standing, narrow and rectangular plan commonly

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 9/10/86
Date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain

Item number 7

Page 2

associated with the frontier. The sheet metal clad gable roof is concealed by a stepped false front. The elements used on the building reflect the frontier construction methods which sought to lend an air of permanence to nascent communities and could easily incorporate either easily transported or locally available materials and techniques. As one of the earliest buildings in Elk Mountain, and the oldest surviving building, this portion of the Pavilion merits inclusion to the National Register due to its local significance.

The extension of the Pavilion was undertaken by Hotel owner John Evans in 1920. This extension reflects the increased importance of Elk Mountain in the regional economy. Evans constructed the extension at a time when increased auto travel and lumbering activities in the area spurred increased travel through and towards Elk Mountain (see statement of significance). The new extension featured a spring dance floor fashioned by laying oak flooring over widely spaced pine log moorings encased in concrete. The interior and exterior is constructed with weatherboard using rough sawn knotty pine. The dance floor is encircled by small galleries with benches and a raised stage.

The interior plan of the building incorporates the original hotel bar, a lounge area within the older structure, a ticket booth fronting the large dance floor, and the performance stage slightly raised above the dance floor and flanked by a small dressing room to the west. The building retains a strong associational element of time and place when the widely dispersed community coalesced and sought comfort in each other's company. From 1880 on the Pavilion witnessed the ebb and flow of people associated with various economic booms and their corresponding busts. The functional integrity of the building remains intact, as does its fabric. The Pavilion continues to play a vital role in the community life in providing a focal point for community gathering.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 9/10/76
date entered OCT 10 1985

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 1

previous travelers into the mainstream of American transportation development. Medicine Bow Crossing became a stage stop. Stage stations like this one represented the first permanent Anglo-American presence in the area. Although the exact location of the station has not yet been ascertained, it is known it was in direct proximity to the Elk Mountain Hotel's present location. A severely eroded segment of the trail ruts located along a ridge line southeast of the property, attest to the trails proximity. In addition, the legal title description to the Elk Mountain Hotel property matches that of the stage stations last recorded (1862, 1872, 1875) series of owners. These owners found a sufficient volume of trail traffic to maintain a toll bridge through the Overland Trail stage era times and after stage traffic waned (Annals, 42).

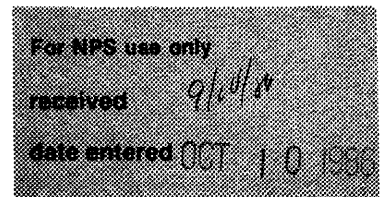
The dispersed rural community of Elk Mountain slowly grew around this old stage station. In 1877 a post office was established to service the budding community and the ranches which had started in conjunction with increased settlement in the region. This settlement owed a great deal to the proximity of the Union Pacific Railroad fifteen miles northeast of Elk Mountain, and economic development of the immediate Elk Mountain area was based on the availability of previously unexploited rangelands for stockraising.

John S. Jones joined the nascent community in 1880 and constructed a large rambling structure on the stage station property which housed a store, saloon and post office. Jones kept the business until 1891 and in the intervening years constructed the southern portion of what is now the Elk Mountain Hotel's Garden Spot Pavilion. By being constructed during a time and in a context where any permanent building signified a commitment to townbuilding, this simple board and batten building became an important component in the social life of the community. Oral histories gathered for the purposes of this nomination from long term residents maintain the dance hall was the scene of numerous social gatherings (Personal communicatin, 1985) drawing people from many miles around. From this early date the historic Elk Mountain property formed an important component in the social life of the widely dispersed community.

With the creation of the Medicine Bow Forest Reserve in 1899 and the Medicine Bow National Forest in 1902 a new era of forestry management was imposed on the previously unregulated forest exploitation in the Medicine Bow Mountain region (Thybony et at, 46). At this time Charles Vagner and Louis Meyer began the Carbon Timber Company using Timber and Stone Act entries and non-local capital. Camps for this lumber company were established on the slopes of the Medicine Bow Range and timber was transported on local waterways to a sawmill adjacent to old Fort Fred Steele along the Union Pacific Railroad line. Boxes, mine props and railroad ties for the railway were the primary products of this enterprise.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 2

Elk Mountain's first true mercantile was constructed by these timber entrepreneurs in 1902 on the west side of the Medicine Bow River.

The establishment of a large, permanent mercantile, along with the existence of the old Elk Mountain Saloon built by Jones in 1880 and by this time owned by John Evans, gave the fledgling community a nucleus from which to grow. The boom in the local logging activities lasted between 1900-1906. It was during this prosperous time that John Evans saw an opportunity for expanding his business.

In 1905 Evans constructed what is now known as the Elk Mountain Hotel. This hotel, and the associated dance hall and saloon built by Jones in 1880, became community focal points. Local organizations reported to have used the buildings included the local Men's and Ladie's Social Clubs and the Sports Club. For as long as the logging boom in the Medicine Bow Mountains continued, the hotel catered to the increasing number of travelers and workers in the region. By 1913 the business done by the Carbon Timber Company with the Union Pacific waned. In 1915 the company sold its remaining assets to the Hanna based Wyoming Timber Company which proceeded to dominate the local logging scene for the next four decades.

In the second half of the 19th century mining played an important part in the economic development of the Medicine Bow Mountain region. As early as 1868 the placer laden streams in the western Medicine Bow area of Douglas Creek produced enough mineral wealth to draw gold seekers through the Elk Mountain area. By 1893 over 12000 ounces of gold had been extracted from placers in the Douglas Creek area (Thybonny et al, 92). Lodge mines with stamp machinery were dispersed throughout the Medicine Bow Mountains and the Elk Mountain community played an important role as an entrepot into the mining area. By 1897 the area west of Elk Mountain was discovered to contain economically exploitable deposits of copper and the Encampment Copper Boom of the early 20th century was initiated (ibid., 110-11). This boom lasted for approximately a decade until wild fluctuations in market conditions and increased competition from neighboring states made it untenable (ibid.). The mining in the region did, however, play an important role in its development. The viability of the Elk Mountain Hotel depended on this economic activity and John S. Evan profited by it in providing accomodations to the mineral entrepreneurs.

Hailed as "...A New-Found Land of Goshen" in a special tourist edition of the Wyoming [Cheyenne] Tribune of July 9, 1912 the Elk Mountain community joined the then rampant scurry towards promoting itself as a "must see" spot on the tourist's itinerary. Boasting "the new hotel recently built and now being

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only	
received	9/10/86
date entered	OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet

Elk Mountain

Item number 8

Page 3

operated by J.S. Evans...modern and up to date in every way", Elk Mountain became accessible to automobile traffic when the local commercial club paid for and opened an improved dirt road between Laramie and Rawlins (Tribune, Goshen, 1). In addition an automobile stage from Hanna on the Union Pacific Railroad was being maintained at a cost of \$2.00 per passenger. The large and comfortable rooms, good menu and anticipated installation of a new electrical plant (eventually installed later in the year) added to the Hotel's distinction as a travel spot according to the Cheyenne reporter (Tribune, Goshen, 1). Complete fishing and camping outfits were available on a moments notice from community merchants and local streams were touted as having some of the best trout fishing in Wyoming. Area residents flocked to the 4th of July celebration (Tribune, Goshen, 1) setting a pattern of area celebration that continues to the present day in and around the Elk Mountain Hotel. The hotel attracted numerous travelers as cars using the new route to Rawlins stopped to appreciate the beauty of the countryside (ibid.). Although the announcement of the recreational qualities of the region drew tourists, large scale recreation development did not take place until the '30s with Civilian Conservation Corps construction on nearby US Forest Service lands (Thybonny et al, 137). The establishment of the Elk Mountain Hotel as an important recreational resource preceded the development of numerous lodges on Forest Service lands, primarily during the 1920's (ibid., 146-52). Local informants maintain that the Hotel enjoyed a steady clientele of travelers, hunters, energy exploration groups, loggers, ranchers, and a host of others from every walk of life during this period (Personal communication, 1985).

Consistent with its long tenure as a community focal point, the Elk Mountain Hotel and Garden Spot Pavilion continued to serve the small community of Elk Mountain and surrounding environs through the succeeding decades.

As a general mercantile and post office dating to 1880 and as a hotel and dance hall dating to 1905, the property long served Elk Mountain and the surrounding area as an important component of community life. Being the only structures devoted to recreational community use in a 50 mile radius, the hotel served a widely dispersed populous during an age of local, circumscribed travel by hosting local women's social gatherings, a variety of local sports clubs and annual firemen's galas. The desire for community underlies the formation of many institutions in the West. Historian R.V. Hines has asserted: "the fact of isolation underlay all other facts, social, economic, and political" (Hines, 1980:95). The need of community grew out of this isolation, as Hines adds: "Isolation was the environment in which the structure of community must grow" (ibid., p. 35). Life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century on the high plains of Wyoming fostered feelings of isolation and parochialism. Long travel distances, extended work days, interminably long windy winters, and a great deal of poverty did not

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 9/10/86
date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 4

create a climate in which Wyomingites extended their interests much beyond their immediate environs (Larson, 1978:583). This conservatism can be related to the harsh realities that Wyoming life often entailed. The importance of the property as a local center of social and recreational activity preceded its significance as a Big Band era dance hall. The isolation of the majority of Wyoming's citizenry remained marked until the first five years of the 1950s when better automobiles and affordable gasoline prices increased economic vitality, and an extensive network of asphalted roads made long distance travel a possibility (ibid., p. 583). With the increased feasibility of long distance travel, the willing traveler could become more familiar with the state's communities and the cultural diversions they offered. The Garden Spot Pavillion at Elk Mountain provided a unique opportunity for diversion. Adjacent to the old Grandview Hotel's main building, the pavilion offered weekend dances featuring both local and professional bands between 1948-1958. Prominent entertainment luminaries that graced the Pavillion's stage included Big Band jazz musicians Charlie Barnet, Tommy Dorsey, Gene Krupa and Les Brown; popular musicians like Lawrence Welk and Louis Armstrong; and country and western artists like Tex Willaims and Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys. The Pavillion quickly became one of the most prominent dance spots in Wyoming. It's functioning as a Big Band era dance hall was simply a continuation of a long standing tradition. Again Hines (1980:111) relevantly addresses the need for for such intercourse: "... isolation... called up a strong psychic yearning for companionship". The availability of a community focal point for such intermingling cannot be underestimated. The Mountain View, and later Elk Mountain Hotel derives its significance from its long standing tradition of providing a haven from isolation in a sometimes inhospitable and often lonely environment. The buildings still found on the property embody the seemingly timeless need for social interaction among people in rural areas and retain a quality that still attracts local inhabitants. Although the Elk Mountain Hotel and adjacent Garden Spot Pavillion derive a portion of their significance from historical associations that have transpired in the last 35 years, the exceptional quality of these associations are important. The association of the Garden Spot Pavillion with the era of the Big Bands dramatically adds to thoperty's significance in that it embodies Wyoming's integration into the mainstream of popular American music culture in an otherwise isolated environment.

John S. Jones took the first actions which led to the establishment of a historically significant landmark on this location. J.S. Jones was born in Illinois in 1850. When reaching twenty he worked in the Kansas mines for several months and then secured a job as a surveyor in the Indian Territory. In 1874 he came to Carbon County, Wyoming and worked for the Union Pacific Railroad. After a short stint and partnership in local merchandising he left Wyoming to try his luck in the Black Hills gold camps of 1876. He later returned to Carbon County and homesteaded on the Medicine Bow River crossing where a rambling structure housing a store, saloon and post office was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received 9/11/86
date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 5

constructed. Dances were held on a 1600 square foot floor within a hall built on the property in 1880. Accompaniment for the dances was provided by local musicians. Jones played a prominent role in county affairs serving as the county surveyor, as a justice of the peace, and state legislator.

John S. Evans, a prominent local resident, obtained the property in 1903. At this time he built a large dance hall and installed a spring board dance floor. This floor, which featured oak boards overlying widely spaced sill logs supported by concrete produced a bounding effect to the delight of those dancing on it and became one of the most notable features of the dance pavillion. In addition to the dance pavillion, Evans had built in 1905, the Mountain View Hotel, replacing the old Jones structure. An electrical light plant was installed in the hotel and town. Under Evans' tenure the hotel became an important component of the isolated Elk Mountain community by providing a vital social and recreational outlet for the areas citizenry.

Evans sold the property to Mark and Lucille Jackson in January of 1947. Financed by a mortgage provided by the Hanna State Bank, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson put money into remodeling the dance hall and renamed the main structure the Grandview Hotel. In the spring of 1948 the Jacksons announced the opening of the new remodeled Garden Spot Pavillion in time for a Valentine's Day Dance. In the succeeding months dances were held during the major holidays with music being provided by Mark Jackson's Band. For Memorial Day (May 29, 1948) Buddy Bair and his 9 piece band became the first outside band (they were from South Dakota) to appear at the pavillion. From this date on the pavillion for ten years brought a diversity of bands into the region to play for the enjoyment of area and sometimes statewide residents.

The purchase of the Grandview Hotel and Garden Spot Pavilion by C.H. and Z.P. Martin in 1978 from the Evans marks the latest developement in the property's history. Now renamed the Elk Mountain Hotel, the property continues to this day to be an important local community focal point, as the annual Labor Day barbeques attest. Local residents continue to frequent the hotel year round, and fall brings a host of outdoorsmen wishing to take advantage of the local hunting conditions. As in the past, this property reflects Wyoming's unique cultural heritage and is significantly representative of the kind of properties desired for our nation's National Register.

Although the Elk Mountain Hotel and adjacent Garden Spot Pavillion derive a portion of their significance from historical associations that have transpired in the last 35 years, the exceptional quality of these associations are important. The association of the Garden Spot Pavilion with the era of the Big Bands dramatically adds to the property's significance in that it embodies Wyoming's integration into the mainstream of popular American music culture in an otherwise isolated environment.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received *g/w/ab*
date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 6

Beginning with the rapid rise to prominence of the Benny Goodman Band in New York during the fall of 1935, the Big Band Era was initiated. The coast to coast radio shows emanating out of New York featuring Goodman's mixed ensemble of trumpets, trombones, clarinets, saxophones and drums set the composition of elements within and pattern of music for the Big Band sound. Although ensembles of this kind had existed since the Twenties, the popularity of the music did not crystalize until the mid-Thirties when radio concerts became extensive. The diversity of sounds within the Big Band spectrum was unique and appealed to an equally diverse number of tastes. In theatres, ballrooms, nightclubs, lounges and on records and radio shows the Big Band boom produced hundreds of traveling and recording bands. As more and more bands vied for popularity, individual styles became significant. Goodman's band epitomized the "swing" sound of predominant brass and rhythms, and at the other end of the spectrum bands like Guy Lombardo's accentuated "sweet" or muted syrupy sounds. Corollary development in the country music world was pioneered by Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys and their "country swing" sound. With the onset of the Second World War the Big Bands dominated the radio airways. Both male and female vocalists associated with the bands rose to prominence and public favor. Frank Sinatra (Dorsey Band), Perry Como (Ted Ween's Band) and Peggy Lee (Benny Goodman's Band) were just a few of many notable entertainers who began their careers as Big Band singers. Almost inexplicably the Big Band era died almost as quickly as it arose. The end of the war precipitated a rapid decline of interest in the Big Band sound. Blame for this phenomenon has been variously placed on a devastating strike of musicians mid-way through the war, the increasing appeal of the individual vocalists, the incorporation of more sophisticated jazz riffs into the music that appealed only to purists, and sounding the deathknell for many post-war forms of entertainment was the rapid rise of television. Whatever the cause, the Big Bands rapidly encountered difficulty in securing regular bookings. A free concert given by Big Band standouts Stan Kenton, Woody Herman and Charlie Barnet during the summer of '49 failed to draw any audience, leading Barnet to comment, "that the public just wasn't buying what we were doing, and that sooner or later our position would become untenable "(Barnet, 1984:149). Barnet left the scene for several years but noted later that, "Something called rock n' roll had gotten a strong foothold..[and that].. the singers had just about taken over the recording industry and band records were not selling worth a damn" (ibib., p. 151.) During these troublesome years Barnet's Band took the dates they could find. One performance took them far west of their usual stomping grounds Barnet explains: "We played a spot called Elk Mountain in Wyoming. There was no town near and the mosquitoes were like dive bombers. They were so bad that we had to burn smudge pots on the band stand. Yet a big crowd had shown up, and I discovered that some of the people had come from as far away as two hundred miles for the dance" (Barnet, 1984:149).

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received 9/20/86
date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 8 Page 7

he fact that people traveled hundreds of miles to enjoy groups like Barnett's underscores the dominant social ethos of the time an ethos articulated by T.A. Larson (quoting author Agnes Spring): "Wyoming for many years resembled a huge family; everyone of importance seemed to be personally known through the state" (Larson, 1978:584). Social gatherings including dancing had long been a prominent feature of Wyoming social life (see Larson, 1978: 202, 211-213). Firemen's Balls, Fourth of July celebrations or any number of other occasions precipitated spirited galas. Whether on the local scale, like those pioneer dances held at the Garden Spot Pavillion before the Big Band era, or on a scale rivaling the Cheyenne March 4, 1878 ball which attracted hundreds of couples from southeastern Wyoming, the magnetic quality of socialibility drew people from widely dispersed regions of Wyoming. The height of the Big Band era had passed, but for a brief time the excitement it fostered was rekindled in environments like Wyoming where the desire for collective diversion breathed a little life into a closing chapter in American popular music. As Barnett has been quoted as saying, the public was turning to new styles of entertainment, but for a brief time Wyoming's Garden Spot Pavillion provided a refuge for the struggling musicians. The insularity and provincialism dominant in pre-war Wyoming was gone and the Garden Spot Pavilion played an important role in bringing Wyomingites into the mainstream of American popular culture, whether it be for better or worse.

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date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 9 Page 1

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- Robert Johnson, age 76 years
- Elmer Wick, age 80 years
- Edgar West, age 93 years

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United States Department of the Interior
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Inventory—Nomination Form

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received

date entered OCT 10 1986

Continuation sheet Elk Mountain Item number 10 Page 1

The two historically significant buildings are concentrated into a 2 and 1/2 acre area. The southwestern corner of the site boundary, the point of origination for the boundary, lies on the northeastern side of Elk Mountain's main street where it crosses the Medicine Bow River Bridge. This places the initial boundary point (point A) immediately next to the bridge's northeasternmost corner. The boundary then passes north-northwest along the river (and parallels the 7260' contour line of the Medicine Bow USGS map) for 200' (61m) and stops at point B. The westernmost boundary line thus preserves the ecological integrity of the site's viewpoint adjacent the river edge.

The northern boundary line has been formed to include only the two historically significant buildings on the site and to exclude four non-contributing modern structures currently in use near by site. From point B the boundary line runs east-northeastward, between the Elk Mountain Hotel (contributing) and a large shed (non-contributing) for 350' (107m). At the end of this run, marked by point C, the line then jogs north-northeastward past three non-contributing structures; a modern trailer, a small storage shed, and a structurally decaying garage. Included within this portion of the site's boundary is the main hotel parking lot and a log fence surrounding a cottonwood grove separating the hotel from the dance hall. Rough wood picnic benches and bar-b-que pits dot this portion of the property and are associated with the public hotel and dance hall activities. The boundary line then extends toward the northern side of the dance hall pavilion and terminates 100' (30m) north of the pavilion's northeastern corner. The boundary point terminates where raparian plant growth form a wall amongst the tree lined banks of the Medicine Bow flood plain. This boundary area encompasses the grassy, public space immediately adjacent the pavilion which is used in conjunction with the dance hall.

The boundary then passes 200' (60m) southeastward to the edge of an improved road on the site's southern boundary. The boundary then follows the northern border of this improved dirt road to the Medicine Bow River Bridge and point A. Through this course, the boundary leaves from point E, the northeasternmost point of the property boundary, to the southwest for 400' (120m) to point F and then travels west-southwest 500' (152m) to point A. The southern boundary thus encloses the hotel, dance pavilion, open grassy, public space and cottonwood grove and the hotel's main parking area. The total acreage within the nomination boundaries is 2.5 acres.

ELK MOUNTAIN HOTEL & GARDEN SPOT PAVILION

- A hotel
- B pavilion
- C non contrib. structures

