

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

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

For NPS use only  
received **OCT 25 1982**  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Sheridan County Courthouse

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Burkett and Main St.  not for publication

city, town Sheridan  vicinity of

state Wyoming code 56 county Sheridan code 033

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name County of Sheridan

street & number Burkett and Main St.

city, town Sheridan  vicinity of state Wyoming 82801

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sheridan County Courthouse

street & number Burkett and Main St.

city, town Sheridan state Wyoming 82801

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wyoming Recreation Commission has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1967 (revised, 1973, 1981)  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records 1920 Thomes Avenue

city, town Cheyenne state Wyoming 82002

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Sheridan County Courthouse is situated on a hill overlooking the City of Sheridan and the entire two acre site is surrounded by a stone wall. The original courthouse, original jail-sheriff's office and a modern addition, currently under construction, are all located within the two acre site. The courthouse, modern addition, sheriff's office-jail, as well as the original two acre site, are all included within the boundaries of the National Register nomination.

The courthouse, constructed in 1904, has elements of two architectural styles: Neo-Classical Revival and Beaux Arts. The three story masonry building is rectangular in plan and has a symmetrical appearance. As was typical of the period, the third or top floor was constructed as an attic story. The courthouse has a high basement with a rock faced foundation. Brick, laid in a common bond, covers all three upper stories. The main entrance is advanced and every fourth course of the brickwork, on the central portion of the facade, is recessed. Masons used this same technique with the brick quoins. The Neo-Classical appearance of the entrance is accented by two smooth columns with Ionic capitols, a large pediment located over the entrance, and the words, 'Sheridan County' printed on the frieze. The windows on the seven bay front are double hung. The first story arches over the windows have radiating voussoirs with keystones. The second story windows have lugsills but do not have arched lintels. The entablature includes: a plain frieze, both dentil and egg and dart molding, and a boxed cornice. A flat roof covers the building. A large elevated, octagonal dome crowns the structure with architectural features such as: oval and rectangular windows, shell carvings, and a balustrade.

At this time a large addition is being constructed on the north facade of the courthouse. A one story wing will connect the two buildings. The courthouse property slopes therefore, the new addition will not be the same height as the original courthouse. Basically, the modern addition appears to be compatible with the old courthouse.

Although some of the original woodwork has remained intact, the interior of the courthouse has been remodeled over the years.

The sheriff's office-jail is a two story building located on the southwest corner of the courthouse complex. Constructed in 1913, the jail is very similar to the courthouse. The stone foundation and watertable provide a visual contrast to the brick facade of the upper two floors. A large, two story, portico with smooth columns and Ionic capitols dominate the main facade. Although the roof is flat, a pediment crowns the giant portico. The fenestration is regular and lintels, similar to those in the courthouse, decorate the first floor windows.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1904/1913      **Builder/Architect** Link & McAllister

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Architecturally, the Sheridan County Courthouse is one of the most imposing courthouses in Wyoming; it is, perhaps, one of the most monumental government buildings in the state, outside of the Capital City of Cheyenne. The Courthouse exemplifies the trend in Wyoming, at the turn of the century, toward construction of stately government buildings that were impressive and authoritative in character. As great as is its architectural importance, however, the historic importance of the Sheridan County Courthouse, and the County Jail, is even greater. Built during a boom period in Northern Wyoming's history, the Courthouse symbolizes the determination of the people of Sheridan County to achieve an element of permanence. More than any other type of structure, it is the courthouse that reflects stability in a people. Built in 1904-1905, with wealth derived from the taming of a harsh land, the Sheridan County Courthouse is a tangible expression of that stability. The Jail, constructed in 1913, affirmed that the citizens of Sheridan County would remain a continuing, positive force in the history of Wyoming. The Jail, consequently, has become an integral part of the Courthouse Square. First a vision, then a reality, Sheridan County's Courthouse Square should be preserved as a reminder of the determination of the settlers of Northern Wyoming.

See Addendum, Item #8, page two

## 9. Major Bibliographical References SEE ADDENDUM

American Association of University Women, The Sheridan Branch. Historical Sheridan and Sheridan County (Sheridan, Wyoming: Sheridan Chamber of Commerce, 1970).

Kendrick, Mrs. John B., II. A Survey of Wyoming County Courthouses. The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Wyoming (WSAMHD, Cheyenne, WY), 1972

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Sheridan, Wyoming

Quadrangle scale 7.5 Minute Series

UTM References

A 

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3	4	5	3	0	10
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4	9	6	11	8	12	15
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The boundaries for the nomination include the courthouse, the new addition constructed on the northside of the original courthouse, sheriff's office-jail, and the two acre site originally dedicated for the courthouse. The courthouse complex sits on a hill and is located in the Kilbourne Addition of Sheridan, Wyoming.

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

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Les Jayne, Mike Gorman (Historian, SHPO)

organization Sheridan County Planner date October 3, 1980

street & number Sheridan County Courthouse telephone 307-672-3426 307-777-6301

city or town Sheridan Cheyenne state Wyoming 82801 82002

## 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 *Jan B. Wilson*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date October 1, 1982

For NPS use only

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

*Lisa McClelland* date 11/15/82  
Keeper of the National Register

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

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Statement of Significance

Item number 8

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Addendum:

The founder of Sheridan, John D. Loucks, first visited the area in 1880, passing through on the Bozeman Trail. Returning in 1882, with a vision, Loucks decided to found a town. On a piece of brown wrapping paper, he drew a plat of the town he proposed to build at the confluence of Goose Creeks, centering on what is now Courthouse Hill. Stakes for the town were driven on May 10, 1882, by Big Horn surveyor Jack Dow. Loucks named the infant town Sheridan, after his commanding general in the Civil War, and became Sheridan's first storekeeper and postmaster. Other settlers arrived, and, by the end of the next year, Sheridan contained fifty buildings of various types.

By fall of 1884, the original forty acre townsite was fully occupied. Desiring incorporation, but lacking the necessary population, the city fathers offered a free lot in a new addition to Sheridan to any local cowboy who would take up residency. Response to the offer was good, and Sheridan was incorporated on March 11, 1885.

Until 1880, the land embraced by present-day Sheridan County had been unorganized, with no county government, but was within the jurisdiction of Carbon County, which assessed and collected taxes from those willing to pay. In 1881, Johnson County was formed from the northern part of Carbon County; by a popular vote taken in 1888, the northern part of Johnson County became Sheridan County, with Sheridan the county seat. The first county commissioners were appointed and, in May of 1888, a full slate of officials was elected.

The first county offices in Sheridan were located in the Sheridan Lodge, a two-story building at Brundage and Main Streets. The offices were rented from Smith and Brundage for \$60 per month. This building was later demolished.

An agreement was reached to lease new, more spacious county offices in a brick building on the Grinnell addition to the town. The offices would lease for \$700 per year for five years, but this agreement was broken. A third set of county offices was located in a three-story building at Main and Alger Streets. Leased from H.F. Cady, the building was wired for electric lights and had a steam plant.

Finally, in July, 1899, plans drafted by Austin and Hays for a new county courthouse was approved by the commissioners. A bid of \$9,600 was accepted but delays led to the leasing of yet another set of offices in Sheridan.

By 1900, due to the coming of the Burlington Railroad, the settling of the surrounding ranchlands, and the opening of coal mines along Tongue River, the population of Sheridan had reached 1,559; Sheridan County, meanwhile, had reached a population of 5,122. By 1903, the records show, Sheridan boasted thirty saloons, six churches, and two opera houses. Construction of Fort MacKenzie, northwest of the city, further enhanced the area's growth.

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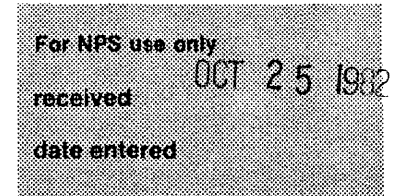
In March of 1904, plans for a new courthouse were solidified by a special election, allowing the county commissioners to issue registered coupon bonds, to the amount of \$45,000 for construction of the building. The bonds were sold to N.W. Harris and Company of Chicago, at a premium of \$1,810.00. In April, plans drawn by the architectural firm of Link and McAllister were approved, and, in October 1, 1904, the cornerstone was laid on land given to the county in 1893 by L.H. Brooks and F.H. Kilbourne. The general construction firm was Ferguson and Pearson. The total cost of the building was \$55,400.55, and the courthouse was occupied in August, 1905. Exterior landscaping was completed in 1909, bringing the total cost of construction to \$75,000.00.

Sheridan and the surrounding county continued to grow; in the first decade of this century, the county's population grew by 215%. By 1910, in addition to the new courthouse, Sheridan had six banks, a new city hall, an indoor swimming pool, twenty-three saloons, and an equal number of lawyers. Within two more years, paved streets and streetcars had made their appearance; Sheridan now had the full accoutrements of a city. In 1913, a major project for an addition to the courthouse was approved, the building of a separate county jail and sheriff's residence wing. The contract was awarded to the Pauley Jail Building Company, in the amount of \$14,200.00. These additions were completed in November of 1913.

Today, the Sheridan County Courthouse continues to serve the people. All County offices, with the exceptions of those of the County Attorney and County Surveyor, are located within the structure. The jail building houses the County Sheriff's offices. The Sheridan County Courthouse is the only courthouse ever constructed by the county, and having been in operation continuously since 1905, it has been of central importance to the history of the region. Sheridan County itself has changed through the years: what was once an area of huge cattle ranches is now the home of productive farms. The "boom and bust" cycle, so prevalent in the West, has always affected Sheridan and its surroundings. It was during a boom period that the Courthouse was built, and it symbolizes the resolution of the people of Sheridan County that they would survive the less prosperous periods. As a symbol of the tenacity of the settlers of Northern Wyoming, the Sheridan County Courthouse is deserving of preservation.

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Continuation sheet Bibliographical References      Item number      9

Page 1

Kuzara, Stanley A. Black Diamond of Sheridan, A Facet of Wyoming History.  
(Cheyenne, Wyoming: Pioneer Printing and Stationery Company, 1977).

Larson, T.A. History of Wyoming. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965).

"Sheridan's Beginning, 93 Years Old Today" The Sheridan Press. May 10, 1975.

Centennial Issue The Sheridan Press. May 10, 1982.

Western Byways Magazine. Vol. 1, No. 1 (May, 1982). p. 32.

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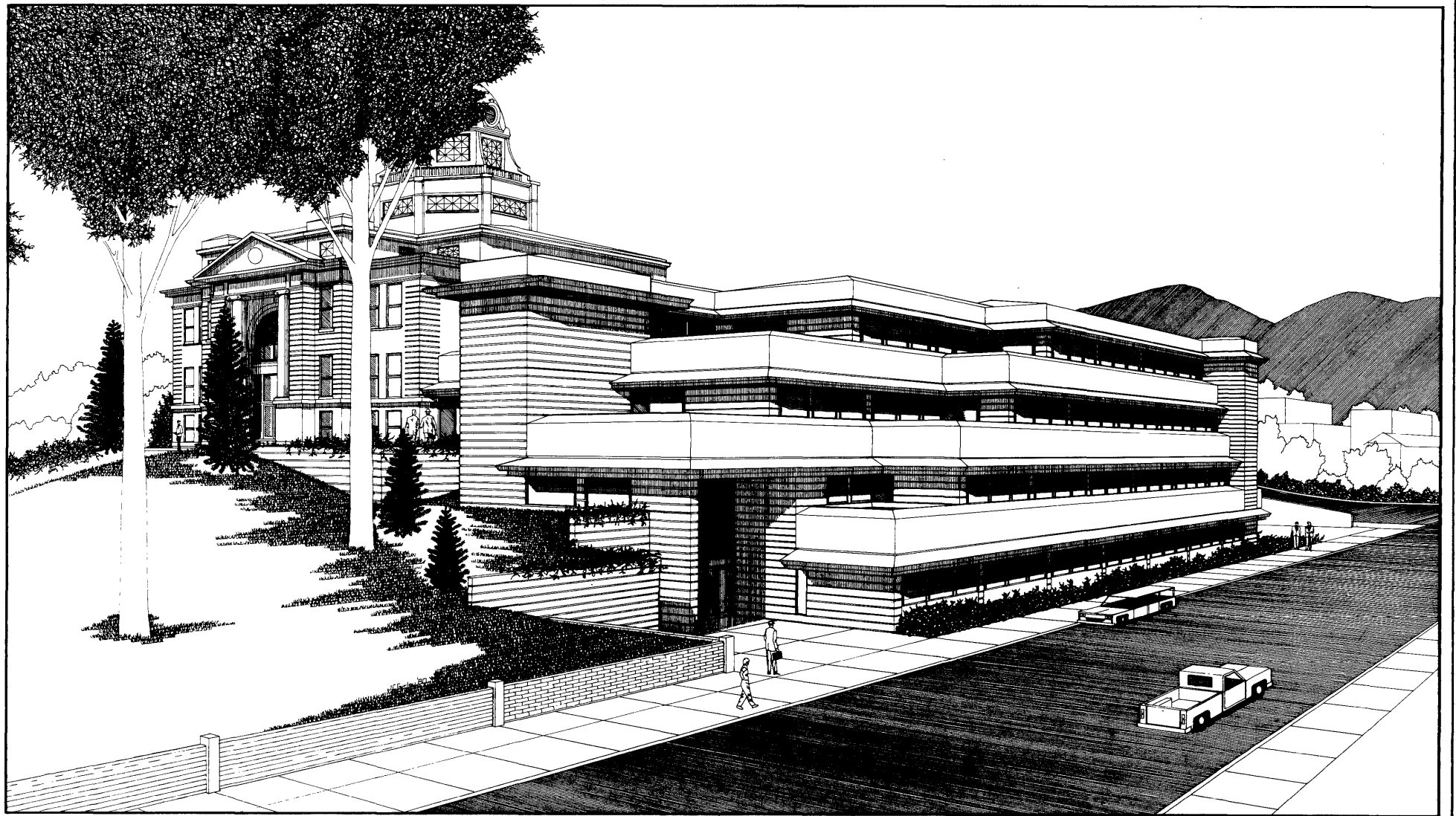
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The complex occupies all of Block 2 in this addition. Main, Burkett, Whitney, and Brooks Streets surround the courthouse complex on all four sides.





SHERIDAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
DRAKE, GUSTAFSON AND ASSOCIATES - ARCHITECTS