

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCRS use only

received

FEB 7 1984

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Sundance State Bank (former)

and/or common Bid Building

2. Location

street & number 301 Main St. _____ not for publication

city, town Sundance _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Wyoming 82729 code 56 county Crook code 011

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	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 Robert E. & Norma J. McMacken; Frank W. Blakeman, Harry E. Ilsley
Richard H. Durfee Estate

street & number 925 10th St. ; SEE Location Address

city, town Spearfish; See Location Address _____ vicinity of _____ state South Dakota 57783

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Crook County Courthouse

street & number 309 Cleveland 283-2054

city, town Sundance _____ state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records 1920 Thomes Avenue

city, town Cheyenne _____ state Wyoming 82002

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Apr 1914

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sundance Bank is located on the corner of Main Street in the business area of Sundance. The nomination includes only the bank building and no additional area, justified by its commercial use and location. The bank is two stories constructed of quarry - faced sandstone taken from the nearby Reuter Canyon. (This stone won the quarry stone award at the Chicago World's Fair in 1916.) Stone blocks are laid in courses and windows and doors have flat stone sills and radiating flat arch heads. The windows are large and evenly spaced throughout. The southwest entry is recessed with a single doric unfluted column and square quarry faced pedestal. The front door features an oversized transom and narrow side-lights. It is an original wood panel full light door. The other door also features an oversized transom and the original wood panel and $\frac{1}{2}$ light shop door. There is an oversized window centered between the two doors. The first floor has a molded stone cove belt course above which is a finished panel sign in relief reading SUNDANCE STATE BANK. The exaggerated parapet also features a molded stone cove belt course, finished stone arched brackets, finished stone panels and stone corner ornaments. The $\frac{1}{2}$ circle finished date stone caps the front facade and reads 1914 in relief. Apart from the replacement of the original glass with textured glass block, the bank remains the same as when it was constructed in 1914.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1914 to 1930's **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sundance State Bank is significant as a representative of transitional commercial architecture in the early twentieth century. Its quarry-faced stone with abundant stone detailing and other Richardsonian Romanesque elements, demonstrate Victorian influence while the unbalanced facade and large square windows are characteristic of later twentieth century styles. Additionally, the bank's date of construction of 1914 is an exceptionally late date for this type of structure because the more popular trend at the time was toward brick structures with less ornamentation. The bank then, embodies a distinctive blend of Victorian and twentieth century commercial architectural characteristics. Windshield surveys of the area indicate the bank is the only one of its kind and likely one of the county's most substantial structures. Additionally, the bank is associated with the World War I agricultural boom which insured the stability and continued growth of the area's agricultural base and affected the broad patterns of Wyoming economic and social history.

SEE ADDENDUM

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ADDENDUM

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Sundance, WY

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UMT References

A

1	3	5	4	9	4	0	0	4	9	1	6	9	5	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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mike Gorman

organization Wyoming Recreation Commission date _____

street & number 1920 Thomes Avenue telephone (307) 777-6179

city or town Cheyenne state Wyoming 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Alvin J. Bastron

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 1/26/84

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>[Signature]</u>	date <u>3/23/1984</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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Crook County, Wyoming, lies between the Little Missouri River and the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming. Comprising some 2,876 square miles in the north-east corner of the state, Crook County was at one time the stronghold of the Sioux nation. The first Americans known to have entered the area were the fur trappers of the Wilson-Price Hunt Expedition of 1811; Jedediah Smith and other trappers crossed the area in 1823. The area remained largely ignored, however, by the thousands of westward-moving Americans. G.K. Warren led a military expedition from Fort Laramie to the area in 1857, and wrote a glowing report of the Black Hills, but it was not until the Black Hills gold rush of the 1870's that settlers came to the area.

Early in 1874 rumors of gold in the Black Hills prompted an elaborate military expedition under the command of George Custer. Custer confirmed the presence of the precious metal in the area, and thousands of fortune seekers rushed to the area. Although little gold was found in what would become Crook County, the gold rush provided the impetus for the removal of the region's Indian inhabitants and the ensuing settlement of the open range.

Crook County, named for General George Crook, was created in 1875 by the Wyoming Territorial Legislature. It was the sixth county created in the territory, and comprised what is now Crook, Campbell, and Weston counties. Most of its original settlers came from the mid-West, fleeing economic depression and poor farm conditions. The rush to the Black Hills proved to be a safety valve for those possessing the optimism and strength to build a new life in the West. In Wyoming, many immediately settled on farms, providing hay and garden produce to the miners in the Black Hills. Cattlemen also entered in the area after coming up the Texas Trail, which ran to Miles City, Montana. Many of them remained in Crook County and built large ranch holdings such as the VVV Ranch and the 101 Ranch.

Although Crook County was created in 1875, it was not formally organized until 1885. At that time, its first elected officials took office. Two years later the Crook County seat was established at the county's only incorporated town, Sundance.

Sundance had been founded in 1879 when Albert Hoge established a trading post at the foot of Sundance Mountain; his post soon became a major trading station for farmers and ranchers of the area. Over the next few years other settlers built cabins near Hoge's establishment, and by 1882 according to an early settler, "Sundance had a few buildings, a post office, a grocery store or two, and possibly two or three restaurants, and of course the inevitable saloon."¹ Within two more years, the town's population was well over two hundred, and Sundance was incorporated in 1887. At that time Sundance was named the Crook County

¹Eva Ogden Putnam, "Pioneering in Crook County," Annals of Wyoming, Vol. 3 (April 1926), p. 206.

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seat, and construction was begun on a courthouse (razed in 1968). Sundance continued to grow at a rapid pace as the surrounding farm and ranch land was settled, and within a year local boosters could boast of a substantial city hall, fire department, several industries, and two banks.

Before 1867 when the Union Pacific Railroad reached Wyoming, the territory had very few people and consequently very little money. Unlike neighboring Colorado with its gold, Wyoming had only its furs, the payrolls of a few scattered Army posts, and the very small amounts of cash money left by the emigrants as they dragged themselves westward; this was all that Wyoming could muster as its medium of exchange. But this was changed by the arrival of the railroad and the ensuing influx of settlers.

The first bank in Wyoming was the firm of H.J. Rogers & Company, which established a bank in a tent in Cheyenne in 1867 over a month before Union Pacific track laying crews reached the site. Other bankers soon moved in; bankers were often found on the very edge of settlement. Frontier bankers were usually simply merchants with a safe. Sundance's first banker recalled how he became established:

Starting this bank was simple. I put up a sign saying "Bank," a fellow came in and gave me \$100.00, another gave me \$200.00, and by that time my confidence in the scheme had reached a point so that I took a chance and put in \$75.00 of my own money and it has been a going bank ever since.²

This bank, known as Stebbins, Fox & Company, evolved into the Bank of Sundance. In 1888, it was one of two banks operating in Sundance. In 1895 the Bank of Sundance was chartered as the Sundance State Bank, thus becoming the oldest state bank in Crook, Weston, and Campbell counties. The bank was housed in a white frame building until 1914 when a new stone building was constructed at 301 Main Street in Sundance. Cut stone for the bank was quarried in Reuter Canyon, located in the Bear Lodge Mountains northwest of Sundance. (In 1916, Reuter Canyon sandstone won the quarry stone award at the Chicago World's Fair.)

The Sundance State Bank proved to be an especially strong institution. It survived the nationwide depression of the 1890's which had forced the First National Bank of Sundance to close in October, 1893. It was good that the Sundance State Bank was on a firm foundation in 1915, for the next two decades would bring disaster to many Wyoming banks.

Between 1910 and 1922 there was a speculative boom in Wyoming's banking industry. Because of lax state banking laws, the director of a state bank had to actually own only 1% of the capitolstock. Therefore, one could become the director of a small bank capitalized at \$10,000 for an investment of only \$100. The number of

²Dick Nelson, Only a Cow Country. San Diego, California: Pioneer Printing, 1951 p. 39.

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state and private banks grew at an alarming rate; by 1920 there were 133 state banks in Wyoming.

Contributing to the growth of banking in Wyoming was an unprecedented boom in the state's agriculture caused by the First World War. The number of cattle in the state almost doubled and prices had reached \$150 per head by 1920. In addition, Wyoming lands were still open to homesteaders. The war effort caused grain prices to spiral, and dryland farmers, including those in Crook County, found it highly profitable to plant crops such as wheat.

This agricultural boom was fueled by feverish speculation in banking and real estate. The inflation in agricultural commodities, coupled with expectations of permanent prosperity, led banks to readily loan money to dryland farmers on the promise of continued production and to stockmen on vastly inflated range herds. Dozens of new banks were organized on shoestrings in order to capitalize these ventures while, in reality, it was inflation that multiplied the values of the land, stock, and grain resources.

By the end of 1919 the war boom was over and there were major concerns for the economy. Returning veterans caused unemployment to soar, and the shattered European economy meant that a major agricultural market was gone. The value of Wyoming's farmland, stock, and produce plummeted. In Crook County and elsewhere in eastern Wyoming, many farmers, faced with bank loans based on boom prices and sales of crops at below cost, simply walked away from their farms. This was a forerunner of the great farmland migrations of the 1930's. For Wyoming, the Great Depression began in the 1920's and bankers were left holding the bag.

Many banks in Wyoming began to fail; 76 failed between 1920 and 1926 alone. Where there were over 133 active banks in the state, by 1927 only the strongest 57 were left. By 1936 there were only 32 banks doing business in the state. Through sound banking practices and perhaps more than a little luck, the Sundance State Bank was one of the survivors.

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This nomination includes only the bank building located at the corner of Third and Main Street in Sundance. The boundary is defined by the street curb on the south and the inside edge of the sidewalk on the west and by the building's exterior walls on the north and east. This boundary is justified by the fact that it includes only the eligible property located on the south 100 feet of Lot 6 Block 3, original town of Sundance as described within the nomination, while excluding the newer one-story brick addition located on the west $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lot 5 Block 3.