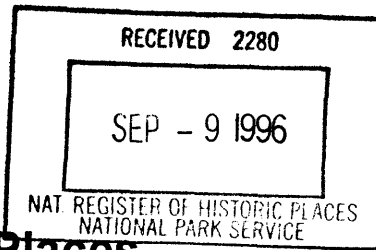


1086

NAPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NAPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fruita Museum

other names/site number Fruita Library, Rock-a-Day Building, 5ME7041

2. Location

street & number 432 East Aspen [N/A] not for publication

city or town Fruita [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Mesa code 077 zip code 81521

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Amelddward Hartmann State Historic Preservation Officer September 4, 1996
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].

determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].

determined not eligible for the
National Register.

removed from the
National Register

other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 10-10-96 Date

Fruita Museum
Name of Property

Mesa County, CO
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/museum

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social/meeting hall
Commerce/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone
walls Stone

roof Asphalt
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

DESCRIPTION

The Fruita Museum, a small Rustic style stone building, sits on a landscaped corner lot facing north onto Aspen Street only three short blocks from Circle Park. It was constructed under the direction of the Works Progress Administration as part of the New Deal employment program of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The cornerstone was laid in 1938. The building is in good condition and maintains a high degree of integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship.

This one-story masonry building, with a full basement, has an irregular plan. The main room measures 26'3" x 20'9". A small wing, extending from the southwest corner measures 12'2" x 11'8". The exterior and interior walls are of fieldstone and sandstone. The foundation is concrete. Courses of cut sandstone face the exposed basement walls. Above the sandstone, cut and broken fieldstones run to the roof line. The roof is constructed of stripped logs and planks covered with asphalt shingles. On the north, there is a center gable on the side gable roof that covers the main room. A very low pitched gable roof covers the wing. The original, wood framed windows have sandstone lugsills and lintels. Basement window openings have been boarded-up.

On the north, the upper half of the wood entry door includes a single light. The door surrounds are of plain wood with cut sandstone lintels. The word "Museum" is carved in the stone below the center gable. On either side of the door there are double, 8-light casement windows. A concrete walk extends to the five concrete steps, with a metal railing at each side, that lead up to the entry. From the concrete walk, an early 1980s concrete access ramp, with metal railings, winds southwesterly and then easterly to the entry. There are two large uncut stones located east of the steps and one on the west.

Centered on the east wall, there is a small, gable roof 1990-91 restroom addition. This 7'6" x 5'10" addition is covered with horizontal wood siding and has a small aluminum sliding window. Access to the addition is through an original exterior doorway. There are double, 8-light casement windows on either side of the addition. There is a wooden attic vent centered over the addition.

On the south wall, a single-stack stone chimney, centered on the main portion of the building, extends through the roof eaves. To the west of the chimney, there are two 8-light casement windows. An evaporative cooler is mounted in the lower portion of the window opening next to the chimney. At the chimney, a 3'6" stone wall juts out southerly from the main building and runs a short distance to the east. Although this wall may not have been part of the original project, its construction is similar. A 5-light casement window is located in the wing.

The west wall of the wing has a double 8-light casement window. On the main portion of the building, a single-stack stone chimney extends through the roof eaves at the ridge. Stone piers support a covered portico, with flattened arches on the north and west, that marks the entry to the basement level. On

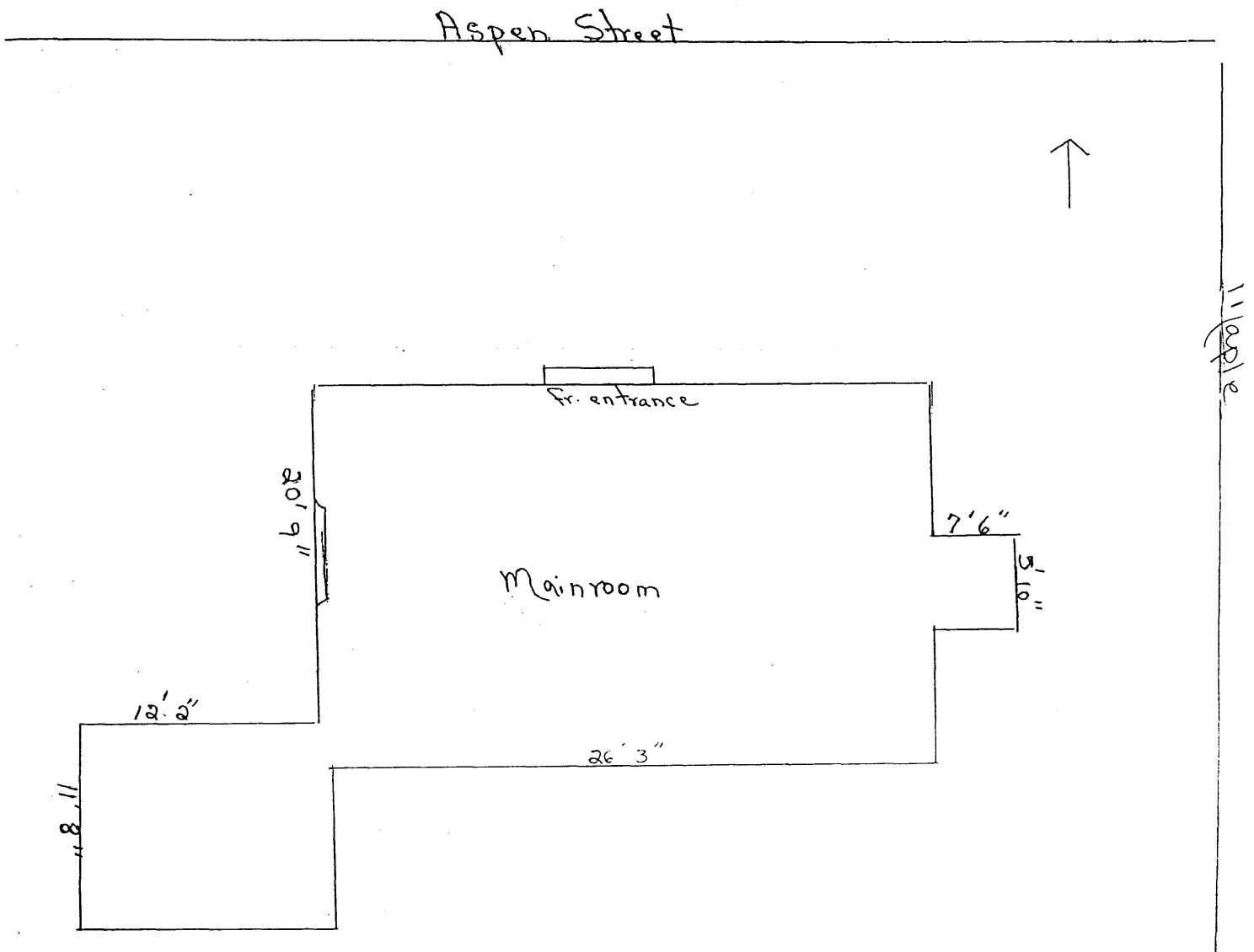
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

PLAN



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

the north, "1938" is carved into the stone above the six cut sandstone steps that lead to the basement. The steps are 8" thick and 6' long. At the basement level, there are wood doors on the north and west.

The main room has a large fireplace at the west end that includes a mantle of smoothed scoria. Pink agatized snail shells, in a lime formation; two rocks containing shells of various kinds, one of which contains more than 500 distinct olite; opals; crystallized bone; pudding stone; agatized concretion; and gastrolith, or dinosaur gizzard stones, are used as fillers. The large hearth stone shows water ripples.

On the east, on either side of the door, are large sandstones containing the imprints of prehistoric animals. The one toward the south is of a four-toed animal with a trail drag, while the one toward the north shows three toe marks. A border of white marble is set around the base of the room.

On the first floor of the main room, twenty-three arched niches extend to varying heights of up to three feet above the floor. There are also several arched niches located in the upper portion of the walls. The gabled ceiling is drywalled. In the wing, exposed logs form the low ceiling. The floors are of large, highly polished stones. Some portions of the basement walls have been plastered. The basement floor is concrete.

A bronze plaque dating from 1939 and reading "Erected through the cooperation of Federal, State, and Local governments by Works Progress Administration. Dedicated to the achievement of human lives, a record of permanent achievement." was lost before ever being mounted. It has recently been returned and is being temporarily stored off-site.

The construction date of a large stone fireplace located at the rear of the site is unknown.

Fruita Museum
Name of Property

Mesa County, CO
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History
Architecture

Periods of Significance
1938-1945

Significant Dates
1938

Significant Person(s)
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
WPA

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NAPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:

Name of repository:
City of Fruita

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fruita Museum is significant under Criterion A for its association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and its importance as a community facility. Although the Fruita Museum was a WPA project, construction of this old stone building was truly a community effort. Many residents throughout the valley took part in gathering materials and in the actual construction. More than half of the hauling cost was donated. Since its opening, the main basement room has been utilized by Fruita youth and adult organizations as a meeting place.

The Fruita Museum is also significant under Criterion C as a well preserved and well-crafted example of stone construction executed in the Rustic Style. Comprised of a variety of shapes, sizes, and types of rocks, many of which bear distinctive markings and were brought to the site from various locations, the building would be next to impossible to duplicate.

The building was constructed to serve as a permanent museum. Local visionaries hoped to exhibit geological displays, antiques, and other local artifacts throughout the building and in the niches in the main room. Unfortunately, issues of the Fruita Times dating from the late 1930s and early 1940s have been lost and there are few specific details about exhibits during the building's use as a museum during the early 1940s. Perhaps understandably, it appears that funding to operate the museum was a problem. Plans to include an observatory to house equipment donated by the son of Dr. James M.G. Beard, a respected local medical doctor, astronomer, inventor, and researcher never materialized. A local collector of frontier artifacts, E.C. Bocking decided not to donate his collection when his stipulations for the type of showcases to be used proved too costly.

It is known that the Fruita Times occupied the building beginning in 1945. In 1948, the local Rotarians decided the building should become a library. Books were collected from a variety of sources, and the library was open every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon. The Fruita Library became a branch of the Mesa County Library in 1952, and remained in the building until moving to larger quarters on March 5, 1996. Currently, the basement remains available for community use, while the first floor is leased as an antique shop.

In an April, 1996 interview, Paul Peacock, a member of the crew that worked on the building, recalled the arrival of "rocks from south of the river and the Utah desert west of Fruita." Some people donated "favorite rocks that they had gathered up from trips." Peacock described some work days as including nothing but hunting for and hauling materials to the site. Some of the larger rocks had to be held in place until the cement started to set. The work was often slow and tedious, resulting in the nickname of the "Rock-a-Day Building."

It is reported that originally the building of a centrally located community library was approved for construction on the site. When a new Fruita High School, with a library, was constructed nearby in 1936 by the WPA after a fire destroyed an earlier high school in 1934, it was decided that a museum

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

would be built instead of the planned library. During the 1930s, the WPA was involved in numerous other projects in the area, including extensive work at the Colorado National Monument. These projects gave local citizens the opportunity to work as well as provided Fruita with important community buildings.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9,10 Page 6

FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, CO

BIBLIOGRAPHY

County Assessor, Mesa County, Colorado. Deeds recorded in 1938 and 1948 (#488818).

Herron, Lydia. Lower Valley Heritage Chapter of the Mesa County Historical Society.

Fruita Times. Article on Paul Peacock. April, 1996.

Peacock, Paul. Interview conducted April 8, 1996.

Rader, A. L. "Open House at Fruita Museum." Fruita Times. July 6, 1939.

Rader, Gertrude. "Popular Fruita Library Started Slowly As Museum." The Daily Sentinel. April 11, 1968.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary includes Lot 1 and the east 12 feet of Lot 2, Block 16, Town of Fruita

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the land historically associated with the Fruita Museum as recorded in a deed dated September 14, 1938 conveying the site to The Town of Fruita.

Fruita Museum
Name of Property

Mesa County, CO
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 12 696240 4335635
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Yvonne Piquette

organization City of Fruita date June 4, 1996

street & number 101 West McCune telephone 970-858-0786

city or town Fruita state CO zip code 81521

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Fruita

street & number 101 West McCune telephone 970-858-3663

city or town Fruita state CO zip code 81521

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Materials Page 7 FRUITA MUSEUM - Mesa County, Co

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Fruita, CO

