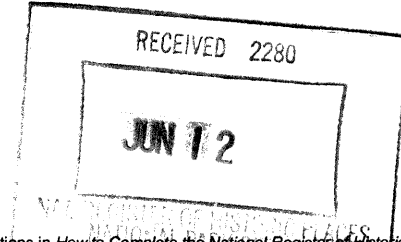


640

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 determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions 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 any 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 (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

Other names/site number RO01-041

2. Location

Street & number 205 Clark

Not for publication

City or town Bassett

Vicinity

State Nebraska Code NE County Rock Code 149 Zip code 68714

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Michael J. ...
Signature of certifying official

June 6, 2006
Date

Director, Nebraska State 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 this 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): _____

Elson H. Beall

7.26.06

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Buildings
<u>0</u>	<u> </u>	Sites
<u>0</u>	<u> </u>	Structures
<u>0</u>	<u> </u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </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 Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC=hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE=restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC=hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE=restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT=streamlined moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation poured concrete

Walls brick and stone

Roof N/A

Other N/A

Narrative Description

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

Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

Name of Property

Rock, Nebraska

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	455875mE	4714680mN	3.			
2.				4.			
							[] 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 Elizabeth Chase
organization Nebraska Lied Main Street date April 2006
street & number P.O. Box 83107 telephone (402) 323-7337
city or town Lincoln state Nebraska zip code 68501-3107

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Bassett Development Corporation
street & number P.O. Box 145 telephone (402) 684-2711
city or town Bassett state Nebraska zip code 68714-0145

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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 a grave.
- D** A cemetery.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- F** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1949-1956

Significant Dates

1949

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Tom Galleher

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 for additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

Name of Property

Rock County, Nebraska

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Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café at 205 Clark Street in Bassett, Rock County, Nebraska is a two-story streamlined Art Moderne style hotel and restaurant. It is located on the west side of Clark Street between Legnard and Florence in the downtown commercial district in Bassett. Bassett, a community of 723 (2000 US Census) serves as the county seat. The economy of this north central Nebraska County is agricultural in nature. Specifically the ranching industry serves as the primary economic engine of the region.

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café was constructed in 1949-1951 and retains excellent historic integrity. The nomination consists of one contributing building, the lodge and cafe.

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café at 205 Clark Street in Bassett, Rock County, Nebraska was constructed in 1949-1951. The two-story streamlined Art Moderne style hotel and café anchors the south end of the 3-block long downtown commercial district of Bassett, a small agricultural and ranching community in the Sandhills of north central Nebraska. It is located among simple early 20th century one and two-story brick commercial buildings in the district.

The Hotel Crook, owned by Walt Crook was the original hotel building on this site and was built in 1925-1926. It was rectangular in plan and faced with dark brick. The current 1949-1951 building was built around it, incorporating some of the interior features of the original building.

Construction of the Bassett Lodge and Range Café began in November of 1949. Work was completed in June of 1951. The new building was designed to encompass the existing hotel building. The span of time required to construct the hotel provided an opportunity for year-round work for several of the builders. During the winter months, the builders worked within an enclosure heated with smudge pots.

The original hotel building did not have a café, but there was a café in a neighboring building directly north of the hotel called the Blue Moon Café. Because additional land was needed for the new hotel and café, the Blue Moon Café was moved from the site and the kitchen equipment and furniture was moved to the basement of the original hotel where the café was temporarily housed until construction on the Bassett Lodge and Range Café was completed.

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café is a simple two-story streamlined Art Moderne style commercial building with horizontal orientation and glass block used throughout the design. It is "U" shape in plan and is approximately 90'-0" by 120'-0". There are 60 rooms, 30 of them with private baths. The foundation is constructed of poured concrete and the exterior walls are concrete masonry faced with a blonde brick and multicolored stone. The interior walls are wood frame with a rock lathe and plaster finish. The building has a flat roof with a wood frame structure overlaid with a standing seam steel roofing material. Remaining true to the architectural style, there are no cornices or eaves.

Other characteristic features of the streamlined Art Moderne style reflected in the design of the building include the thin decorative bands of dark brick that outline the second floor windows and the first floor windows on the south side. This simple touch adds to the horizontality of the style. The first floor windows are trimmed in aluminum while the second floor windows are wood frame with the dark brick used for the lintels. With the exception of small diamonds of contrasting dark brick on the upper portion of the façade, there is virtually no other decorative ornamentation on the building.

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Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

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The main façade is oriented toward the east and is dominated by a flat aluminum canopy and a rounded corner on the southeast accentuated by wraparound clear glass windows on the first floor and glass block on the second floor. A flat canopy extends the length of the main facade and wraps around the rounded corner. It is interrupted by the raised canopy at the main entrance to the hotel and continues again across the length of the front of the café. The main façade also features rounded corners on either side of the main entrance to the hotel accented with a single vertical band of glass block on either side.

Two original neon signs extend from the building at the upper portion of the main façade. The Bassett Lodge sign hangs vertically above the main entrance to the hotel and extends a few feet above the second floor cornice. The sign features the words Bassett Lodge outlined in neon extending vertically from top to bottom. The bottom of the sign is rounded and features the silhouette of a cowboy on horseback. The Range Café sign is located above the entrance to the café. It is a half circle with a rounded projecting horizontal section that contains the word "café". The upper rounded portion features the word "Range" in script. The entire sign is outlined with neon. Neither sign is currently operative, although the neon tubing is extant.

The main entrance to the hotel is raised by two stone steps and is located in the center of the main façade. The doorway has a set of swinging wood doors with simply stated aluminum hardware.

The café entrance is located on the northeast corner of the building and also raised by a couple of steps. The doors feature same material and hardware as the doors to the main entrance to the hotel, however the café doors are hinged and do not swing.

The north façade of the building is plain with irregularly spaced windows on the second floor. The south façade is more interesting and includes evidence of a portion of the exterior of the original hotel. The rounded corner on the southeast corner of the main façade wraps around the corner and continues for a short length and stops. At that point, the building steps in and continues to the west for a short distance. This area of the building exposes the south wall of the original hotel. The exterior finish of this section is stucco. The 1949-1951 building continues at this point and wraps to the south and southeast, forming the southeast wing of the hotel. This wing of the hotel returns to the streamlined Art Moderne style of the main portion of the hotel and is constructed of the same materials and finished in the same brick.

A small three-room hotel manager's apartment is located in the southeast wing of the building on the first floor. It is tucked back from the main façade. A rounded corner mirrors that on the main façade of the hotel with glass block on the first and second floors. A shake shingle shed roof above the apartment's exterior entry was probably added later. The apartment has access to it from within the hotel as well as its own private entrance off the courtyard. There are two small bedrooms, two small bathrooms, a kitchenette, and a living/dining room.

A small courtyard is located on the southeast corner of the property. It is accessed from the rear of the hotel lobby as well as the manager's apartment. A multicolored stone fence emulating the stone in the lower portion of the main façade surrounds the space. That same stone fence extends to the south beyond the hotel and café property to the adjacent home.

The main entrance to the hotel opens into a small vestibule. The brick façade from the original building forms the back wall and another set of swinging wood doors with simply stated aluminum hardware open into the hotel lobby. There are two stairwells on either side in the vestibule that lead to the basement. The north stairwell leads to the women's restroom downstairs, the south stairwell leads to the men's restroom and other basement spaces. The floor of the vestibule is covered with square shaped rust colored quarry tile. The same tile is also found throughout the lobby area and café. There is a single door in the vestibule that opens into the café.

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Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

Name of Property

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A small reception desk greets visitors as they enter the lobby. There are 350 sections of padded upholstered wainscoting that cover the lower walls throughout the lobby, the main staircase, and surrounds the reception desk. A telephone switchboard is the focal point behind the reception desk. The switchboard, installed in 1953, is functional and directs incoming phone calls to individual rooms and dials outgoing calls. Radiant heat is supplied by circulating water from the boiler through copper tubing beneath the square shaped rust colored quarry tile floor of the lobby and café.

The wood trim throughout the interior of the building is Philippine Mahogany. One of the primary features of the lobby is a low stone fireplace on the south wall. The stone for the fireplace, the exterior main façade, and the courtyard fence was imported from several different quarries. The main staircase leading to the second floor is another important feature of the lobby. The same rust colored quarry tile graces the risers and the treads of the staircase, while the balusters are wrought iron. A handrail of Philippine Mahogany completes this striking staircase.

There are 13 guestrooms with private baths on the first floor of the hotel, along with the hotel manager's apartment, the lobby and reception area, several storage and utility areas, an office and a lounge. The sidewalls in the hallways are covered with 1/8" of rubber flooring up to the wainscot level. The application of this material was used to protect the walls from suitcase damage. Original Art Deco styled light fixtures can be found throughout the hotel and cafe. The guest room light fixtures are aluminum indirect ceiling pendants with a bowl-shaped brushed aluminum shade and openings covered with plastic geometric shaped inserts. The light fixtures in the café are semi-indirect fluorescent lights with frosted and louvered aluminum shades suspended from the ceiling by two stems.

The Range Café is located off the hotel lobby on the north side of the building. A lunch counter with padded upholstered wainscoting and chrome mounted backless stools extends the length of the north wall. The same square shaped rust colored quarry tile floor from the vestibule and lobby continues into the café. Padded upholstered booths line the perimeter of the café while tables and chairs are located in the main area of the room.

The kitchen is located at the northwest corner of the building. A dining room used for parties and formal dinners can be accessed from the café as well as from the main hallway of the hotel.

The second floor mirrors the first floor in plan but includes additional guestrooms above the café. There are 38 guestrooms on the second floor, some with private baths, others without. The guestrooms without private bath facilities access shared baths in the hallway.

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café has been in continual use as a hotel and café since its completion in 1951 and has retained considerable historic integrity from its period of significance (1949-1956). Original fixtures and finishes are in excellent condition and add to the value of the building's integrity. There have been few significant alterations since it was constructed, however deferred maintenance has taken its toll on the systems and decor.

In 1961, two guestrooms were removed to enlarge the dining room for the café to make it more comfortable for larger events. More recently, the roof has been replaced and improvements made to the café's kitchen to comply with State of Nebraska health safety requirements. Plans for additional work to bring the building into compliance with building codes and energy efficiency have been developed. These projects include egress, accessibility, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), plumbing, electrical, fire and life safety systems. The current owners of the Bassett Lodge and Range Café are working to insure that the planned improvements do not affect the historic character or integrity of the building.

As an aside, two of the Bassett Lodge and Range Café billboards along U.S. Highway 20 outside of Bassett, that are contemporaneous to this nominated property, are also being restored.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located at 205 Clark Street in Bassett, Rock County, Nebraska, the Bassett Lodge and Range Café is locally significant in the category of Commerce under Criterion A and Architecture under Criterion C. It was constructed in 1949-1951 for use as a hotel and café for the cattle buyers from around the country who came to the Bassett Livestock Auction. The hotel and café were built around a 1925-1926 hotel building on that site. The Bassett Lodge and Range Café stands as an important connection to the livestock industry in Bassett and as a strong example of streamlined Art Moderne style commercial design. This property retains an excellent degree of historic integrity. The period of significance, 1949-1956 begins with the date of construction and ends 50 years prior to this nomination.

Site History

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café is a fine example of streamlined Art Moderne commercial architecture. The hotel and café was built around an existing hotel on the site.

The original hotel on the site, the Hotel Crook, was built in 1925-1926 and was a small brick rectangular plan building. It was owned by Walter Crook, a Bassett businessman who built and remodeled numerous homes and businesses in the community. He was a city council member for eight years and the mayor of Bassett for twelve.¹

The Hotel Crook was not adequate to lodge the large number of livestock buyers who came to Bassett from all over the country to attend the weekly livestock auctions as well as the large annual cattle sale that took place the first week in October.

To accommodate the increasing demand for lodging from the livestock auctions, Rock County ranchers Floyd and Maude Lackaff purchased the Hotel Crook on October 8, 1949. Maude Lackaff was the energy behind the plan for a new hotel. She was originally from Tennessee and had only an eighth-grade education. She taught herself business, typing, bookkeeping and mechanics. She and her first husband operated a ranch in rural Rock County. After his death, she married Floyd Lackaff and they combined their ranches. According to her 1981 obituary in the "Nebraska Cattleman" magazine, "she had a vibrant personality and was very knowledgeable about livestock."²

Additional support for a new hotel came from eleven local businessmen and ranchers who came together to form an investment corporation to finance construction of the new facility that would include additional rooms to the existing hotel, owner/manager residence, a new lobby, a new café with a dining room and new front facade.

Articles of Incorporation were filed on November 1, 1949, for the Bassett Hotel, Inc. for operation of a hotel and restaurant with an authorized capital stock of \$100,000.³ On November 19, 1949, a corporation of eleven investors was formed including Floyd and Maude Lackaff, ranchers; Howard Thompson, rancher and livestock auction owner; I.W. Merritt, rancher; Otto Lamprecht, Ford automobile dealer; Thomas J. Galleher, architect and lumberyard owner; Walter Mauch, lumberyard owner; Homer L. Buell, rancher; Earl J. Peterson, rancher; Paul Strand, rancher; and Floyd Arrowsmith, rancher. Retired businessman Paul Engler, Sr. served as the original corporation secretary and Harold Allen, an attorney

¹ Rock County Nebraska Centennial 1888-1988. Compiled by Rock County Centennial Book Committee and Rock County Historical Society. Bassett, NE: Rock County Leader, Inc., 1987, p. 209.

² "Lackaff, Maude Derrick." The Nebraska Cattleman. August 1981, p. 12.

³ Notice of Incorporation, Rock County Leader. November 17, 1949, p. 9.

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Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

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and Rock County Judge, provided legal services to the corporation.⁴ Floyd and Maude Lackaff put up \$60,000 and each of the other investors put up \$5,000. The money was originally paid back to each investor at 20-cents on the dollar.⁵

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café was designed by Tom Galleher, a graduate of the University of Nebraska with a degree in architectural engineering. He returned to Bassett to run his family's lumber yard after the death of his father H.W. Galleher in 1949.⁶ Tom worked with Maude Lackaff to plan and design the new hotel. He created the blueprints for the building, and with specific direction from Maude, designed the interior.

The plan was to enlarge the hotel and build a new attached café with a dining room. There was no general contract issued for construction, however Gib Richards was the general foreman, supervising the subcontractors on the project. He was also responsible for the exterior framework of the building. Over 55 workers were employed during construction. Fred Gale and Son were in charge of the masonry. Fritz Graber from Gordon was the brick mason who built the fireplace in the lobby. Howard and Dallas Bennett, Ken Minnig, and John McGuire were the interior carpenters. Freddy Johnson laid all of the tile. Roy Johns did the plumbing while Everett Cleveland and Gordon Townsend did the electrical work. Neil Bretz of Ainsworth finished woodwork, painting, wall papering and carpet.⁷

Maude Lackaff's vibrant personality and decorative taste was reflected in the interior of the hotel. She liked modern design using glass blocks, rounded corners and padded wainscoting. The interior of the hotel and café reflected her taste in that era of design. Padded, upholstered wainscoting surrounds the lower walls of the hotel, café, reception desk, and some of the walls upstairs. The sidewalls in the hallways were covered with 1/8" rubber flooring up to a wainscot level so the walls wouldn't get damaged by suitcases. The interior wood trim is all Philippine Mahogany. The floor in the lobby of the hotel and the café is quarry tile heated underneath with copper tubing and water from the boiler.

Each guest room is decorated with a different wallpaper design and matching drapes and bedspreads. They also contain Art Deco style furniture and fixtures. The bathrooms feature Art Deco style porcelain tubs, sinks, and toilets. Each bathroom has two different colors of glossy ceramic tile in the tub and shower surround and to a wainscot level in the rest of the bathroom. The floors are also done in tile.

In June of 1951, a dinner for stockholders and supporters was held as an opening for the Bassett Lodge and Range Café. Eighteen months of construction had produced an elegant hotel and dining facility. The final cost was \$300,000.⁸

Over the years, several employees helped create the fine reputation of the Bassett Lodge and Range Café. Ima Burns Schindler was the first cook for the Range Café. Managers of the Bassett Lodge were Harper Burnett, Gordon Trousdale, Ed and Verna Grafel, Charley Ellithorpe, Bob and Peggy Trayner, Clara and Betty Seiker, Dana and Twila Kepler, George and Ima Schindler, Willis and Betty Haynes, Richard and Genevieve Lackaff, and Joe and Wilma Andrews.⁹

Criterion C – Architecture

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café is significant at the local level under Criterion C as an excellent example of the streamlined Art Moderne architectural style, applied to a commercial building. The streamlined style is part of the Art

⁴ Schubert, Mary, "End of an era." *Rock County Leader*. January 5, 2005, p. 1.

⁵ Lackaff, Richard and Genevieve, Don Coash, and Korla Keller, taped interview, 13 January 2006.

⁶ *Rock County Nebraska Centennial 1888-1988*. Compiled by Rock County Centennial Book Committee and Rock County Historical Society. Bassett, NE: Rock County Leader, Inc., 1987, p. 45.

⁷ Schubert, Mary, "End of an era." *Rock County Leader*. January 5, 2005, p. 1.

⁸ Schubert, Mary, "End of an era." *Rock County Leader*. January 5, 2005, p. 1.

⁹ *ibid*

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Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

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Deco style which was popular from the mid-1920's into the late 1930's and early 1940's. Art Moderne and streamlined Art Moderne buildings were less decorative than buildings designed in the Art Deco style. Where the Art Deco style is characterized by vertical projections and stylized and geometric motifs, the streamlined Art Moderne style is by its horizontal orientation, horizontal banding, flat roofs, glass block, smooth wall surfaces, tubular steel railings, and other elements evocative of mechanization and industrial design. Its architectural expression paralleled its contemporary designs in airplanes, trains, automobiles, and household appliances.¹⁰

Criterion A – Commerce

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café is also locally significant in the category of Commerce under Criterion A. It was constructed in 1949-1951 for use as a hotel and café for the cattle buyers from around the country who came to the Bassett Livestock Auction. The hotel was built around a 1925-1926 hotel building already on that site. The Bassett Lodge and Range Café stands as an important connection to the livestock industry in Bassett.

The livestock auction can be considered the impetus for the construction of the new hotel. The Bassett Livestock Auction was originally the Bassett Livestock Sales Company. It began in 1930 as a place for ranchers and feeders to gather and buy or sell livestock, household goods, machinery, and other items.¹¹

The large annual cattle auctions run by the Sandhills Cattle Association began in 1939 and brought more than 1,500 people at one time to Bassett. Thousands of head of premium cattle were sold to buyers from all over the country to replenish their herds. Because the Hotel Crook was inadequate for lodging this many people, auction attendees slept in their cars and residents of Bassett opened up their homes in an effort to accommodate as many visitors as possible.

The auction became quite a festival, with many other planned activities during the event. It began every year with a buffalo feed, cocktail hour and live entertainment. Earl Peterson donated the buffalo every year which was slaughtered at the grocery store, wrapped in foil and burlap, cooked in a pit for 12-hours with a donated pick-up truck load of oak, and then served in sandwiches. The top three sponsors of the event received special gifts including a saddle, a pair of boots, and a hat.¹² One of the other highlights of the auction was the sale of a cow raised by the boys at Father Flanagan's Boy's Home (NHL 1985) more commonly known as Boys Town.

Today, the Bassett Livestock Auction has a sale every Wednesday with an average of 3,000 head of cattle sold, with sales totaling about 100,000 head per year. Buyers come to Bassett from Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas, and Iowa. There is no longer a large showcase sale in October, but a two-day barbeque and sale takes place every July. The Bassett Livestock Auction salebarn is one of the top 5 barns in the state of Nebraska.¹³

The Bassett Lodge and Range Café were used throughout the year by others not associated with the livestock auction. Traveling salesmen and tourists stayed there for one night or more during the week while other residents lived there year-round, including schoolteachers and retirees. There were several offices and other businesses located in the building including an accountant, a beauty shop, an irrigation business and the branch office of the Sandhills Cattle Association.¹⁴

¹⁰ Ahlgren, Carol A., Dr. A.B. Pittman Veterinarian building. Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Application for Landmark or Landmark Heritage District, Omaha, NE, March, 2006.

¹¹ Rock County Nebraska Centennial 1888-1988. Compiled by Rock County Centennial Book Committee and Rock County Historical Society. Bassett, NE: Rock County Leader, Inc., 1987, p. 48.

¹² Lackaff, Richard and Genevieve, Don Coash, and Korla Keller, taped interview, 13 January 2006.

¹³ Thompson, Pat, "Bassett Livestock Auction." E-mail to Elizabeth Chase. 16 April 2006.

¹⁴ Lackaff, Richard and Genevieve, Don Coash, and Korla Keller, taped interview, 13 January 2006.

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Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe

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The Bassett Lodge and Range Café continues to be a local gathering spot, just as it was in the heyday of the cattle auctions. Chess games were popular with local ranchers, while in the basement of the Lodge recreational games and dancing lessons took place. There are even legends about the high-stakes poker games involving real estate, played out in the basement.¹⁵

In more recent years, the hotel became known for its collection of Western artwork, furnishings, and memorabilia including award winning Herb Mignery bronzes and Western themed Peter Hurd paintings owned by the Lackaff family. Mignery (b. 1937), a Bartlett, Nebraska native, is well known for his cowboy and Western themed bronze sculptures.¹⁶ Peter Hurd (1904-1984), an American Contemporary Realist painter was a student of N.C. Wyeth. Hurd is best known for his official portrait of President Lyndon B. Johnson that hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.¹⁷

The Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe remained under the management of the Lackaff family (Richard and Genevieve Lackaff) until March 2005 when the when the property was acquired by the Bassett Development Corporation. The Bassett Development Corporation is following in the footsteps of the original promoters and investors of the hotel and café by raising funds through local investors for the purchase and rehabilitation of the Bassett Lodge and Range Café so that it can serve the needs of today's visitors to Bassett.

Immediate improvements were made to the café for compliance with the State of Nebraska Health Code requirements. With new management, the hotel re-opened with limited guest rooms available for occupancy. A plan for additional work to bring the building into compliance with current building codes and to provide quality lodging for visitors to the area has been developed.

The Bassett Lodge and Range Cafe will be restored to retain the historic look and feel of the streamlined Art Moderne style and rustic ranch style décor and atmosphere.

¹⁵ Hammel, Paul, "Bassett circles wagons to revive lodge." *Omaha World Herald*. August 22, 2005, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Herb Mignery Biography*. Cowboy Artists of America. 17 April 2006. <<http://www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com/members/active/Herb.Mignery>>

¹⁷ *Peter Hurd Biography*. Art Direct Gallery. 17 April 2006. <http://www.artdirectgallery.com/peter_hurd.htm>

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property is described as original village block 5, lots 3 and 4, Rock County, Bassett, Nebraska.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include all of the property historically associated with the Bassett Lodge and Range Café.

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Photographs

The following pertains to the photographs listed below:

Bassett Lodge & Range Café
Bassett, Rock County, Nebraska
Photographer: Elizabeth Chase, Nebraska Lied Main Street
February, 2006
Negatives in the collection of the Nebraska Lied Main Street

Photograph	Description of Photograph
1	view looking NW showing main and S facades
2	view looking SW showing main and N facades
3	view looking W showing courtyard and apartment facade