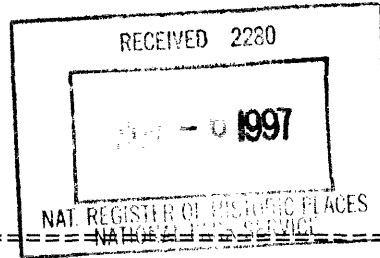


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc.

other names/site number J.W. Denio Milling Company  
Mill Inn

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 2161 Coffeen Avenue not for publication N/A  
city or town Sheridan vicinity N/A  
state Wyoming code WY county Sheridan code 33 zip code 82801

=====

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.)

Signature of certifying official

10/24/97  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau



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Sheridan County, Wyoming (Page 3)

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
<u>1</u>	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>2</u>	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE Sub: processing storage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: hotel

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof reinforced concrete, poured concrete deck, built-up tar and gravel

walls reinforced concrete frame; wood frame with wood siding;

8" fluted concrete blocks

other \_\_\_\_\_

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

=====  
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.)

- 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.
- 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture  
Commerce

Period of Significance 1921-1947

Significant Dates 1921

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Ballinger & McAllister, Bloomington, Ill., general contractors; Nordyke & Marmon, Indianapolis, Ind., machinery contract

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

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(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 of Additional Data
- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other

Name of repository: Karen Moody, owner

See Continuation Sheets for continued bibliography

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreeage of Property approximaely 2.35 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>346400</u>	<u>4959500</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	____ See continuation sheet.					

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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 Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian  
organization Rosenberg Historical Consultants date July 31, 1997  
street & number 739 Crow Creek Road telephone (307)632-1144  
city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82009

=====  
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 Owners

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

1. Owner of Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. mill component (Mill Inn)

name KMM Inc.  
street & number 2161 Coffeen Avenue  
telephone (307) 672-6401  
city or town Sheridan state WY zip code 82801

2. Owner of concrete grain elevator and storage tanks

name Floyd Fleming  
street & number 5211 Coffeen Avenue  
telephone (307)674-7355  
city or town Sheridan state WY zip code 82801

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Sheridan County, Wyoming (Page 7)

=====  
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 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.  
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Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc.  
Sheridan County, Wyoming

7. Description

The Sheridan Flouring Mills, Incorporated, located at 2161 Coffeen Avenue in Sheridan, Wyoming, was originally constructed by J.W. Denio in 1920-21. It is an elongated rectangular reinforced concrete building with a two-story south wing, a central six-story segment, and a two-story brick element on the north end. These components represented the milling, packaging, and storage portion of the flour mill. There is a narrow intervening open space between the north end of the building and a reinforced concrete grain elevator and smokestack (the tallest elements) and seven pairs of attached grain storage tanks. In 1978 the mill was converted to a motel, which is now known as the Mill Inn. The property occupies a lot at the northeast corner of Coffeen Avenue and U.S. Route 14, which is the major exit from Interstate 25 to south Sheridan. To the east is an open lot and landscaped patron parking where mill employee and customer parking was once located; to the west is landscaped patron parking and scattered commercial businesses west of Coffeen Avenue; to the south is a predominantly residential area south of U.S. Route 14 that generally retains a more rural aspect; to the north is a generally recent commercial strip on either side of Coffeen Avenue that includes the Holly Sugar Factory (about one-half mile north), which was on the same railroad siding as the flour mill and dated from about the same time period. There is a small modern commercial business located just west of the grain elevator and tanks and an open lot to the east. A railroad siding on the west side that once serviced the flour mill has been abandoned and removed. The 144-foot high grain elevator, 110-foot high tanks, and six-story flour mill component dominate the skyline and can be viewed from a great distance from all directions. It is in fact the major landmark in the southern portion of the City of Sheridan.

The flour mill building is an elongated rectangle oriented on a north-south axis. The basic framework of the building consists of vertical and horizontal steel reinforced concrete girders laid out in a simple box-like pattern. Each floor and the roof consist of reinforced poured concrete slabs. The original flour mill building as constructed in 1920-1921 consists of three principal components (from north to south): the two-story boiler house, the six-story mill portion, and the two-story south wing.

At the north end of the mill complex is the two-story brick boiler house (49 feet by 48 feet) resting on a concrete foundation with a full basement. The



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basement level is partially above ground level because the topography slopes downward to the north, giving the building the appearance of three stories at the north end. This building was equipped with a battery of steam boilers with a 400-horsepower capacity that furnished the power to operate the mill and the elevator machinery. This element has a gently pitched gable roof composed of reinforced concrete slabs. There is a flat-roofed monitor with seven bricked-over window bays located on the west roof slope. The east side of the monitor feature is sloped. Originally, there were two parallel sets of monitors with steeply pitched shed roofs on the east and windows facing west. The windows consisted of pivoting units with wire glass lights and metal sash. These windows were removed and the bays bricked over at an unknown date but perhaps when the powerplant was converted to electricity. During the conversion from a flour mill to a motel in 1978, the two monitors were joined with a single flat roof and the north and south ends framed in, leaving a single sloped element on the east side. There were large round metal ventilators on the east roof slope.

The areas of the walls between the concrete girders are filled with brick laid in a common bond, which has subsequently been painted an off-white. Originally, there were window bays with concrete lintels and sills in the east, north, and south sides of the boiler house. The windows were metal sash pivoting units with wire glass lights. Three of the smaller units on the west side have been bricked over, but their location is indicated by the concrete lintels and sills. The remainder of the windows were replaced with two-light horizontal sliding units during the 1978 renovation. The west side has two such windows, one each aligned on the first and second stories. The north side has a total of seven horizontal sliding windows on the first and second stories above the basement level. There is also an entrance with a metal door in the basement level on this side. The east side has been substantially altered with three horizontal sliding windows and an entrance accessed via a metal stairway. The north half of this side once had four large multi-light windows with metal sash divided between the first and second stories. Most of the brick in the north and east walls of the boiler house has been replaced with cement block. This probably occurred when the powerplant was converted to electricity, and the large steam boilers were removed. As a result, the entire north panel of the east side has been replaced with cement blocks. The south half of the east side has retained the original brick wall. It had two multi-light metal sash windows and a twin-leaf wooden door that was on the ground level. During the 1978 renovation, vertically aligned horizontal sliding windows were installed in

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the first and second stories. The first-story window is in the approximate location of the twin leaf door. A window bay that was located between the twin leaf wooden door and the window in the second story was sealed over with 8" fluted cement block. The south end of the boiler house has been converted to four motel units necessitating four new entrances on the south side of the first and second stories where this component extends beyond the east and west building lines of the remainder of the mill building.

The central component is six stories high (63 feet) and is 35 feet east-west by 52 feet north-south. It utilizes the same reinforced concrete girder frame and has a gently sloping gable roof composed of reinforced concrete and with concrete brackets under the eaves. The roof has been somewhat altered by the addition of a metal mansard awning that is bolted to the framework with struts. It encircles all sides of this component. The awning bears the name of the current business, the Mill Inn.

The reinforced concrete framework of this building created four large rectangular bays on each of the six floors on the east and west sides and two bays on each floor on the south side. The north side was enclosed except for two bays on the sixth story. Typically, the bays were filled in with brick that surrounded a multi-light window with metal sash. On the third through fifth floors, there was a pair of 15-light windows with metal sash and wire glass. The two windows were divided by a vertical metal member running the height of the bay. The bottom three lights in each window were fixed. Above was a six-light pivoting unit; the remaining six lights were fixed. The windows on the sixth story were shorter and contained a pair of nine-light units with a pivoting six-light member. Windows in the first and second stories were paired twelve-light units with a pivoting six-light member. The pair of windows in the second bay from the north were separated by a brick pier.

The interior of the six-story component retains a concrete and metal stairway with metal pipe railings with wrought iron decorative work. There was also a "man lift" that consisted of a continuously moving set of steel cables with foot and hand holds, allowing a worker to mount the lift and be carried up or down from floor to floor.

During the 1978 renovation of the building, the brick walls and the windows in each bay were removed. The bays in the third through sixth floors were then framed in with 2" x 4" stud walls and two-light horizontal sliding

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windows units were installed. The remaining area was filled in with 8" fluted cement blocks that fit together to give the appearance of a single corrugated concrete panel. Below each window is a louvered ventilator for the air conditioner in each room. The rooms in the first and second stories have been converted to individual motel rooms and contain bays that are finished with wood lap siding around the windows and have an entrance with a metal fire door. The third through sixth floors have been converted into offices and are rented to a variety of businesses. They are accessed by an elevator that is located in the second bay from the north. The west wall of the elevator is composed of glass. The west side of the shaft is also filled in with plate glass, affording a view west across Sheridan to the Bighorn Mountains. The installation of the elevator necessitated the building of a flat-roofed rectangular structure on the roof to accommodate the elevator mechanism. A metal fire escape was also installed on the north side of this component.

The ground level of the six-story or tower component consists of the main lobby and office. The west side has a one-story wood frame enclosed entry (7 feet by 14 feet) that is the main entrance to the lobby. The exterior walls are covered with wood lap siding, and the roof has a metal mansard canopy that bears the business name "Mill Inn" and a Wyoming cowboy logo. The enclosed entry was constructed in 1986. There is a one-light metal door in the south side of the entry. The east side lobby entrance is protected with a similar metal mansard canopy but does not have an enclosed entry. The remainder of the east side of the tower component is basically identical to the west side, except that the elevator shaft is located on the west side; the opposite bay on the east side is filled with horizontal sliding window units.

The third component of the original mill building is the south wing. It is two stories high (23 feet) and is 110 feet north-south by 35 feet east-west. It has the same framework of reinforced concrete girders and rests on a concrete foundation without basement. It has a gently sloping gable roof composed of reinforced concrete slabs with a covering of built-up tar and gravel. The roof has extended eaves with cement brackets. A metal mansard canopy has also been added since the 1978 renovation that matches the canopy on the tower portion. The second floor is constructed with reinforced concrete. An interesting feature of this component is a seven-foot wide concrete balcony supported by concrete brackets that is located between the first and second floors along the length of the south wing as well as the

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six-story component on the east and west sides. This balcony once acted as a canopy to protect the first floor loading docks of the flour mill. It has been converted to a balcony by the addition of a steel balustrade covered with steel mesh. It provides access to the second-floor rooms via exterior steel staircases located at the south end on the east and west sides. Like their six-story counterparts, the large bays created by the reinforced concrete girders of the south wing were originally filled with a brick wall with multi-light window units with metal sash and wire glass. The original building had five equally sized bays on the first and second stories on the east and west sides and two bays on each floor on the south side. The windows were pairs of nine-light units consisting of three fixed lights on the bottom row with an upper six-light pivoting element. The second and fourth bays from the north end consisted of large doors for access to the loading docks on the east and west sides. The rail spur continued along the entire length of the west side of the building. Trucks were loaded on the east side loading docks. There is a seven-foot wide concrete slab along the outside of the east and west sides of the building at ground level that matches the concrete balcony above and was once the top of the loading docks. Subsequent landscaping around the building has brought the surrounding land up to this level.

In 1943 the south end of this wing was expanded with a two-story masonry addition (41 feet north-south by 42 east-west) with a basement. This area was used for offices for the flour mill. This addition was the same height as the remainder of the south wing and used a reinforced concrete girder framework. However, it extended eastward an additional seven feet. The bays were filled with brick walls that surrounded multi-light metal sash windows. There is a flat-roofed one-story brick addition (7 feet east-west by 16' north-south) on the west side of the 1943 addition that appears to have been built at the same time.

During the 1978 renovation, the brick walls and metal sash windows were removed from the bays and framed in with 2" x 4" stud walls. Two-light horizontal sliding window units and an entrance with a metal door were placed in each bay. The exterior walls were covered with wood lap siding. Red brick salvaged from the old bay walls have been used to accent the vertical reinforced concrete girders along the east and west sides. Each bay in effect represents an individual motel room unit. The second-story window bays in the south end of the building have been bricked over. A wood deck with wooden railings has been added to the second story on the east side of the

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1943 addition to provide access to the second story rooms. The metal mansard canopy has also been added to this later addition to match the remainder of the building.

The interior of the old flour mill has been entirely refurbished. During the 1978 renovation, all interior walls were removed except the stairwell in the six story component. Individual motel rooms and offices were framed in with stud walls and covered with drywall. Suspended tile ceilings and spackled plaster ceilings were installed. Interior doors are wood panel with wood trim. All exterior doors are metal fire doors. Windows are two-light or three-light horizontal sliding units with thermal panes and anodized aluminum frames. Wall-to-wall carpeting is the typical floor covering. Decorative brick piers accent the interiors of many of the rooms and hallways.

The grain elevator and attached storage silos represent a separate element of the flour mill that was used for sorting, storing, and cleaning the various grains. The elevator is elliptical in shape (40 feet north-south by 50' east-west) and is 144 feet high. It is constructed of reinforced concrete. There is a circular reinforced concrete smokestack attached to the southeast side of the elevator that extends above the height of the elevator. It was formerly used as the exhaust chimney for the steam boilers that once powered the flour mill and was later used as an incinerator. The elevator has small nine-light windows with metal frames located in three tiers in the upper third of the elevator on all sides. The elevator has a one-story shed-roofed addition on the east side that was used for unloading trucks and wagons. There was a similar addition on the west side for unloading railroad cars, but it has been removed. The elevator was equipped with scales and dumps for unloading the grain. Wheat cleaning machines cleaned the grain as it entered the elevator. The original mill had four circular storage tanks, each thirty feet in diameter and 110 feet high. The capacity of the tanks was 240,000 bushels of grain. Sometime in the early 1930s, ten additional concrete grain storage tanks were added to the north end of the existing elevator and tanks increasing the storage capacity to about 410,000 bushels. The elevator was connected to the flour mill via covered conveyor belts running to the second floor of the six-story tower component. The elevator and storage tanks were leased for grain storage after the flour mill closed. However, they are now abandoned and the internal machinery has been removed from the elevator. Otherwise, the elevator and storage tanks appear to be in their original condition. The south side of the elevator still bears a multi-colored logo with a cowboy on a bucking bronco and mountains in the background. The sign

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reads from top to bottom "BEST OUT WEST ENRICHED FOUR, TOMAHAWK FEEDS FOR LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY, SHERIDAN FLOURING MILLS INC."

Although the machinery and some later metal outbuildings and storage silos have been removed, the essential elements of the flour mill and the concrete elevator and storage tanks remain intact. The conversion of the flour mill to a modern motel with offices represents an imaginative adaptive reuse that has essentially preserved this early twentieth century Sheridan landmark. Some of the materials in the flour mill were necessarily changed during the conversion, but comparisons with historic photographs show a remarkable overall similarity in design due to the retention of the basic reinforced concrete framework, floors and roof, fenestration pattern, scale and proportions. Although the exterior brick walls have been replaced within the large rectangular bays between horizontal and vertical concrete girders, similar masonry materials with a rough corrugated finish have been used. More importantly, the most notable changes to the mill have occurred to the interior. The associated concrete elevator and storage tanks remain essentially original and therefore have excellent physical integrity. Overall, the property retains good integrity in terms of location, design, setting, and feeling and association. Perhaps the greatest testament to the overall integrity of the site is the fact that former mill employees still residing in Sheridan often visit the mill with the encouragement of the current owner and can readily demonstrate and explain the former locations of the various mill components and the complexities of the milling process. A similar example of adaptive use of a historic mill is found in Akron, Ohio, where the Quaker Oats Cereal Factory, including the mill and the silos, was converted into a hotel and retailing center. It is enrolled in the National Register of Historic Places.

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8. Significance

The Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. represents one of the most important early commercial enterprises in the City of Sheridan and Sheridan County. From its origins at a previous location in the 1890s, it grew to be one of the largest commercial enterprises in the city and the region. Sheridan grew from a small settlement platted along the Bozeman Trail in 1882 and prospered as a result of the surrounding ranching, mining, and logging industries. The Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. reflects the agricultural component of these industries. It served not only Sheridan but also the surrounding agricultural region including southeastern Montana and northeastern Wyoming through its network of farmers and grain elevators located along the mainline of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. It encouraged the growth of different strains of wheat by local farmers and provided a reliable market for their crops. It also converted these raw materials into flour, livestock feed, and other products to service the demands of the local community, as well as a much larger national market that extended from coast to coast. Therefore, nearly every family in the region either bought and utilized the products of the mill, had members working directly for the mill, or was engaged in growing wheat for the mill. At its current location, the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. served Sheridan and the surrounding region from 1921 until finally closing in 1972. It became one of Sheridan's largest and most enduring employers with a substantial payroll and was also one of the largest taxpayers in Sheridan County and in the State of Wyoming. It also provided a substantial income for the hundreds of farmers in the region who depended upon the mills as a buyer for their agricultural products. Therefore, the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the key role it played in the economic development of the city and the surrounding region in the early twentieth century.

The origin of the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. can be traced to a small steam-powered mill built by Captain Scott K. Snively in the early 1890s. The single elevator mill was purchased by the Sheridan Milling and Manufacturing Company in 1896 and could produce forty barrels of flour in twenty-four hours. In 1903 or 1904, the mill was purchased by J.W. Denio. Denio was a miller from Longmont, Colorado, who was aided by another experienced miller, August Maier. The new concern was known as the J.W. Denio Milling Company; Denio's son Ralph was the manager. The family expanded and improved the facility, located on Broadway two blocks south of the Sheridan Inn on the

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east side of town. They started milling flour and encouraged local farmers to grow better varieties of hard spring and winter wheat for their mill. The mill provided a local source where the farmers could exchange their wheat for flour and bran and where grocers and bakers could purchase supplies, a boost for Sheridan's economy. Before that time, flour was shipped into the area from Montana and Nebraska at high freight costs. However, Sheridan County had a large supply of coal that could be used to power the steam boilers of the mill, and Denio was able to produce a high quality product that matched or exceeded flour from outside sources. The operation grew from its modest beginnings of operating one day a week to a twenty-four per day, year-round concern.

On July 2, 1919, a fire attributed to spontaneous combustion in the stored wheat destroyed the facility. The loss was estimated at \$250,000, and the mill was described as the largest industrial concern in Sheridan. Undaunted by their loss, the Denio family vowed to build "a large modern, fire-proof plant on the site of the old mill and elevators." Although they did rebuild, the Denios chose a new site on Coffeen Avenue at the south edge of the city in what was then a rural setting. It was necessary to build a rail spur from the existing Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad line to serve the new mill. Undoubtedly influenced by the loss of their first mill by fire, the new \$300,000 building was constructed of reinforced concrete, steel, and brick with metal frame windows and steel doors and frames. It was reported that no wood was used in the construction of the new mill. The contract for the mill and elevator was let to Ballinger and McAllister of Bloomington, Illinois, who began work on April 1, 1920. The machinery contract was awarded to Nordyke and Marmon, of Indianapolis, Indiana. The new facility included a six-story mill with a capacity of 1000 barrels daily, a two-story warehouse, and a boiler house equipped with a battery of coal-fired steam boilers with a 400-horsepower capacity for powering the mill. It also included a 144-foot high concrete grain elevator and four circular concrete storage tanks, each 30 feet in diameter and 110 feet high and capable of storing 240,000 bushels. In 1923, the Sheridan Press described the J.W. Denio Milling Company as the largest milling plant in Wyoming.

In October 1927, the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. was established by local interests to purchase the J.W. Denio Milling Company, which had recently been consolidated into the Denio-Barr Corporation. The Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. was incorporated in an amount of about \$500,000. The board of directors consisted of Alf Diefenderfer, president; Peter Kooi, vice-president; Wilbur



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D. Kistler, secretary-treasurer and manager; Henry C. Stevens, and E.E. Lonabaugh. Many of the stockholders consisted of those who had previously held stock in the Denio-Barr corporation and included Senator J.B. Kendrick, Clarence Wulfjen, J.W. Denio, Archie Craig, Francis Williams, Mrs. Agnes Girrard, and E.R. Dinwiddie.

The Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. was the center of a large grain growing network in the region. It had thirteen country elevators that extended along the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad line from Gillette, Wyoming, to Hardin, Montana. On the north end in Montana, there were elevators at Hardin, Garryowen, Lodge Grass and Wyola. In Wyoming, elevators were locted at Parkman, Ranchester, north Sheridan, Wyarno, Buffalo (on a branch line), Arvada, Gillette, Clearmont and Big Corrals. By 1934, the company milled 100,000 to 125,000 barrels of flour annually and handled 750,000 to 1,000,000 barrels of wheat annually. The company required thirty to forty employees with an annual payroll of about \$60,000 and was one of the largest taxpayers in Wyoming. By 1959, the work force had grown to seventy-five employees involved in production and administration with an annual payroll of \$375,000.

Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. produced a variety of products that were shipped all over the United States. In addition to flour, these products consisted of biscuit flour, wheat cereal, doughnut flour, and pancake and waffle flours, all bearing the trade name "Best Out West." Prepared feeds were sold under the trade name "Tomahawk." By the 1950s, the mill produced 2,000 sacks of flour per day along with 100 tons of livestock feed. Storage capacity was 420,000 bushels at Sheridan and 200,000 bushels at the rural storage facilities. One million bushels were required to keep the mill in operation for one year. The livestock feeds were composed of milling by-products and locally grown barley and oats, as well as corn, cottonseed meal, soy bean meal, linseed meal, molasses and other fortifiers.

The mill contained a testing laboratory on the fourth floor, where all wheat and its products were tested from the time the wheat entered the elevators until the finished product was packaged. The wheat was stored in the elevators acoording to protein content so that it could be blended to make a flour resulting in the proper protein proportion. In order to test the quality of each run of flour, a baker was employed to actually bake bread twice a day.

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Wheat was delivered to the mill via truck and the railroad. Trucks pulled into the east side where the grain was weighed and sampled. It was dumped and put in the elevator via continuous belts with attached buckets and stored in the various tanks according to protein content. Trains bringing grain from the country elevators unloaded on the west side of the elevator. Grain was unloaded from the sides of the boxcars using "pull boards" and transported to the top of the elevator with similar continuous belts with buckets and distributed in storage tanks according to test results. Excess grain was also stored in the storage tanks via overhead pipe from elevator to tanks. Additional storage facilities were added including nine steel grain storage tanks and a large steel quonset building, all of which were later auctioned and removed when the mill closed.

The milling process was quite complex. When the grain was to be milled, it was carried from the elevator to the mill via conveyor belt to the second floor. The wheat underwent a lengthy cleaning and washing process that began in the elevators and ended in the mill before the actual processing could take place. It was washed and cleaned so that dust, dirt, weed, seeds and foreign grain were separated from the wheat. At one point a magnet picked up any particles of metal that might have been mixed in with the grain during harvesting, threshing and storing. A centrifugal device hurled the grains of wheat against steel pins, which broke hollow grains and killed living organisms within the grain. The wheat was then carried by "legs" or continuous belts with buckets to the fourth, fifth, or sixth floors to be stored in bins where it was tempered by adding water to aid in removing the husk or bran.

The first floor mainly consisted of a warehouse for the finished products. Trains were loaded on the west side, trucks on the east side. From the second floor, flour to be shipped in bulk was loaded onto trains through metal tubes and pushed by air. All packing and sacking (cotton and paper) was also done on the second floor. Finished packaged products were moved to the first floor for shipping via chutes. All of the milling equipment was located on the third through sixth floors. Generally, after tempering, the wheat was crushed and ground by means of a series of corrugated and smooth rolls. The corrugations in the rolls became finer as the product progressed through the mill. The wheat then passed through sieves that eliminated coarse outer portions from the inner portions that produced the flour. The wheat continued through more rolls and sieves until final separation was complete. The flour was also sized and graded according to use.

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In September 1963, the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. was purchased by Nebraska Consolidated Mills Company, an Omaha-based business that became better known as Con-Agra Inc. in 1971. This large concern operated flour mills in Nebraska, Alabama, Indiana, and Texas, as well as feed and poultry manufacturing plants in several states. The mill equipment was upgraded in 1967 with over \$500,000 in improvements. However, by the late 1960s Nebraska Consolidated Mills maintained that it needed to sell the Sheridan mill due to lack of business. The local Farmers Co-op Oil Company attempted to purchase the mill to keep it operating. However, Nebraska Consolidated decided not to sell and kept the mill operating until 1972, when it closed permanently. Con-Agra stated that increased freight rates had made the Sheridan operation unable to compete with mills closer to major population centers. In April 1974, the grain elevators were purchased by Sheridan Commercial; Schoonover and Associates from Fort Collins, Colorado, purchased some of the frontage property; and WERCO, a local corporation composed of William and Jane Woolston, Ruth Geier Rice, and William Eisele purchased the mill and its machinery. The extensive machinery, the steel building, and steel grain silos were sold at auction. However, using his own architectural plans, Eisele converted the old mill building into a 44-unit motel with office suites in the upper stories in 1977-78. WERCO then sold the property to NX Bar Ranch, Inc. In December 1992, KMM, Inc. composed of stockholders Karen M. Moody, Mandy Moody, and Pete Moody purchased what was then known as the Mill Inn from NX Bar Ranch, Inc. The Moodys subsequently upgraded the electrical system, completed numerous repairs and remodeling, and built new parking lots with landscaping. The grain elevator and storage silos remained in use for grain storage by Sheridan Commercial but have now been abandoned. All machinery has been removed from the elevator.

The current owners are sensitive to the history of the flour mill and utilize historic photographs and text in advertising and news releases for their business, the Mill Inn. This inventive example of adaptive use of a historic building has served to preserve a prominent Sheridan industry and landmark that has stood at this location for over seventy-five years.

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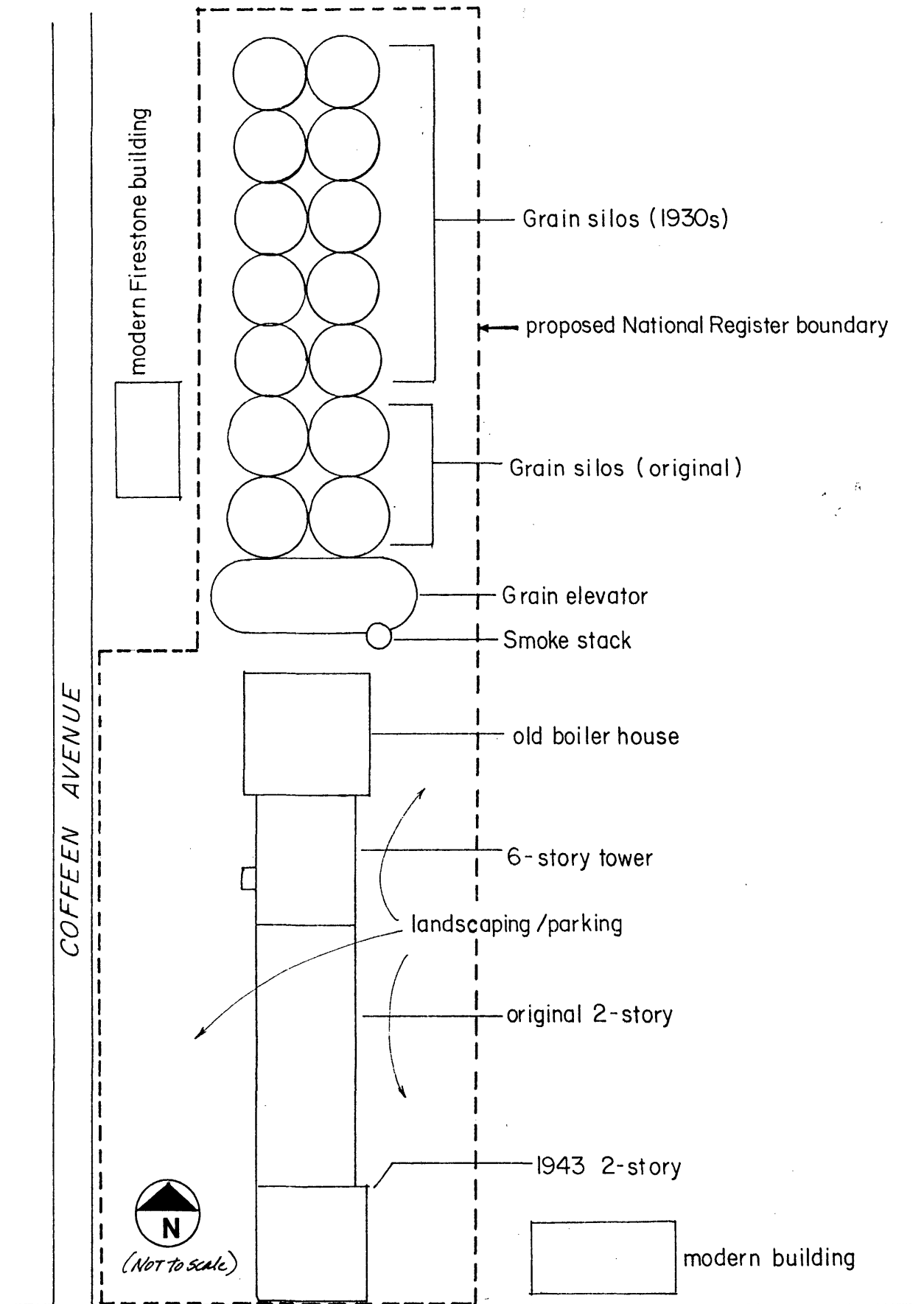
10. Geographical Data

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nomination includes the Sheridan Flouring Mills, Inc. mill building (currently the Mill Inn) and the property on which it stands at 2161 Coffeen Avenue, Sheridan, Wyoming, Tract 7, Brundage Place Second Addition. It also includes the grain elevator and associated storage tanks (under separate ownership) located on portions of Tracts 7 and 8, Brundage Place 2nd Addition, also described as a portion of Lot 2, Section 2, T55N-R84W.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is generally defined by the legally recorded boundary lines of the property. The boundary includes the building and structure described in this nomination. However, it excludes a 1960s-era masonry flat-roofed building located on the east side of the east parking lot for the current Mill Inn (not depicted on the Sheridan, Wyoming 7.5' USGS Quadrangle). The boundary also excludes a modern Firestone Tire and Service commercial building located directly west of the grain elevator and storage tanks. Several buildings and metal grain storage tanks shown as hollow rectangles and as a single solid circle respectively on the Sheridan, Wyoming 7.5' USGS Quadrangle dated 1968 and photorevised in 1977 have been subsequently removed and are therefore excluded from the boundary drawn on that map. Also, the Firestone commercial building is not depicted on this map because it had not yet been constructed. Finally, the rail spur shown on the map has been removed.



**SHERIDAN FLOURING MILLS, INC. (MILL INN)**