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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 (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort, The

other names/site number The Fort Restaurant; 5JF.4373

2. Location

street & number 19192 State Highway 8 [N/A] not for publication

city or town Morrison [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Jefferson code 059 zip code 80465

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [X] statewide [] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title: Mark Wolfe, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer; Date: 5/23/06

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 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:

- [X] 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.

Signature of the Keeper: [Handwritten Signature]; Date of Action: 7/14/06

The Fort
Name of Property

Jefferson County/ Colorado
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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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)

COMMERCE/TRADE/ restaurant

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/ restaurant

RECREATION AND CULTURE

EDUCATION

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS/ Pueblo

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls ADOBE

LOG

roof ASPHALT

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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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)

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1963

Significant Dates

1963

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

LUMPKINS, WILLIAM

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 of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Arnold family

Denver Public Library

The Fort Restaurant- business office

The Fort
Name of Property

Jefferson County/ Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- 1. 13 483529 4386365 (NAD 27)
 Zone Easting Northing
- 2. Zone Easting Northing
- 3. 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 Kathy Lingo, Len Lingo; Anne Wainstein Bond (for the property owner)
organization Architecture 2000, P.C.; Anne Wainstein Bond date February 24, 2006
street & number 5031 S. Ulster, #325 telephone (303) 290-9930
city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80237

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 SPA Holdings, LLC
street & number 19192 State Highway 8 telephone _____
city or town Morrison state Colorado zip code 80465

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.

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DESCRIPTION**Summary**

The Fort is a two-story building in the Pueblo Revival style, constructed of load-bearing adobe brick walls with a slight batter and plastered with light tan-colored adobe stucco. The building consists generally of three wings, U-shaped in plan, approximately 100 feet long from north to south and 140 feet long from east to west, surrounding a courtyard that opens to the north. The primary elevation faces northwest. For clarity, northwest will be referred to as "west". The east and west wings are primarily one story tall, approximately 12 feet in height, with flat roofs surrounded by parapets and supported by peeled wood vigas that project beyond the faces of the walls. The south wing has two stories, with a shallowly-sloped roof with overhangs and wooden fasciae. The adobe walls vary in thickness from 14 to 24 inches. Foundations consist of a combination of concrete spread footings, with some stone visible at the bases of some of the exterior walls. The stones are tan sandstone, cut to rectangular shapes in varying sizes.

The northwest and southeast corners of the building are punctuated by round battered adobe towers with open ports through the tall parapets above the roof. Entrance to the building is from the west, through a "sally port" opening (as identified on architect William Lumpkins' drawings) that pierces through the west wing and opens into the courtyard. The east and west one-story courtyard walls are plastered adobe with few penetrations. In contrast, the two-story south courtyard elevation features abundant divided-light windows and glazed French doors on both floors, and a second-story balcony. A low-slope shed roof shelters the balcony at the second floor, and the balcony in turn shelters a walkway to the main building entry at the first floor. The covered walkways at both levels are defined by a wooden railing and a colonnade of two-story 8x8 structural wooden posts. Lumpkins' drawings describe the walkways as "portals" at both floors.

Exterior walls facing west, north, and south are fairly solid, plastered adobe walls pierced by a few small punched openings with wood sash divided light windows. The east elevation features an abundantly glazed window wall, taking advantage of a significant view to the east. The northeast corner of the building consists of two later one-story additions, also opening expansively to the east view. The additions are constructed of concrete masonry, plastered to emulate the adobe plaster finish of the original building.

Historic portions of the interior feature plaster ceilings and walls with bullnose corners, concrete floors colored to emulate a traditional ox-blood floor stain, exposed vigas and latillas, and corner fireplaces typical of the Southwest. The notable craftsmanship of Elidio Gonzales is evident in adze-finished carved wooden doors, lintels, and wooden posts topped with zapatas. This attention to detail, authenticity, and craftsmanship extends to the interior wooden chairs and benches. These were handmade by Gonzales and his apprentice Antonio Archeleta, in the Padre Martinez style used at the original Bent's Fort.

In general, The Fort retains a good degree of integrity, possessing all of the seven aspects in varying degree, including location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling and association.

Site Access

The Fort is located on the east side of State Highway 8, a few hundred feet north of its intersection with US Highway 285. The site is south of the town of Morrison, Colorado, in Jefferson County, at an elevation of 6100 feet above sea level. The building is set well below the grade of State Highway 8.

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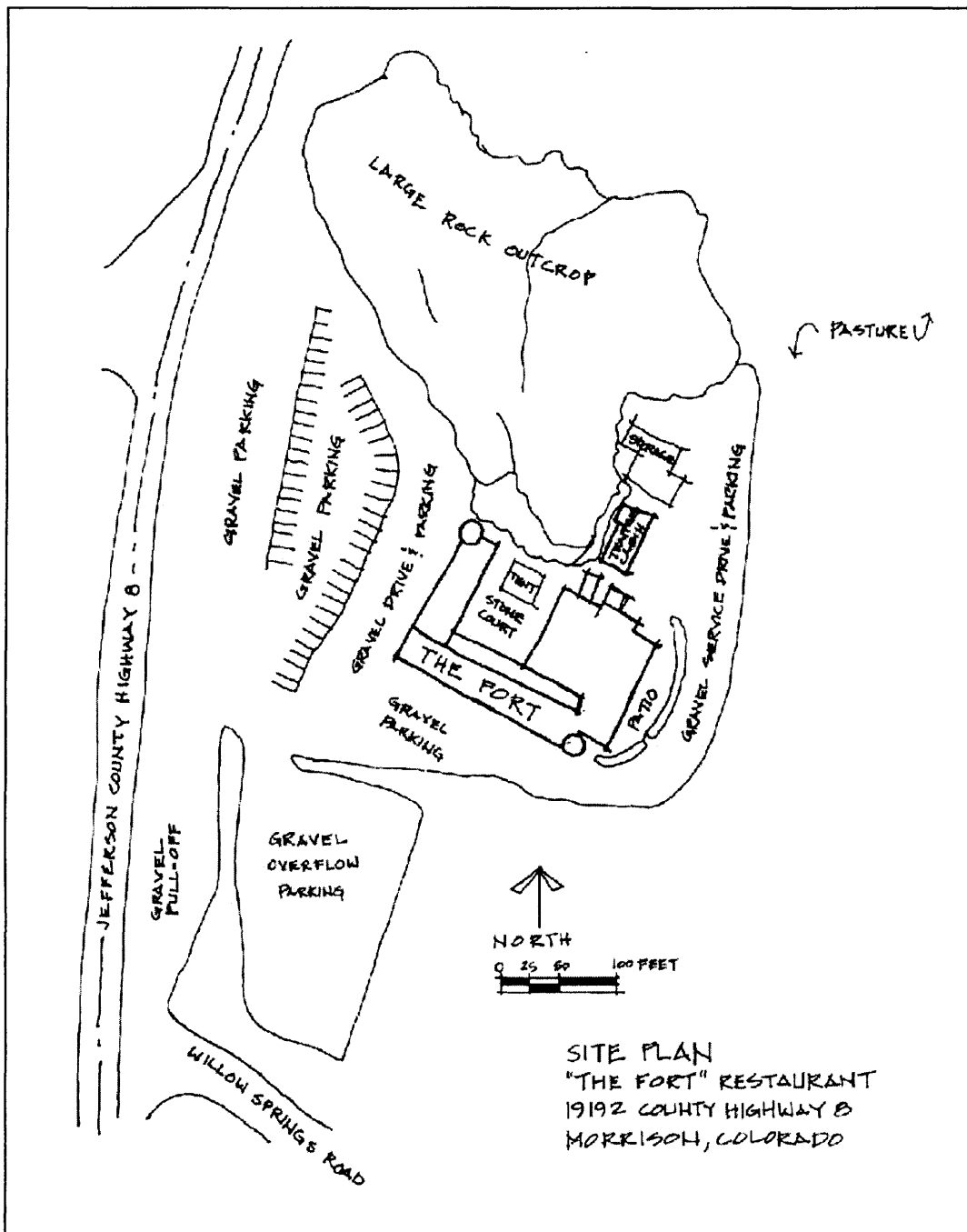
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Two drives provide access from Highway 8 down to a upper asphalt parking lot. At the north and south ends, two more driveways lead down to a lower asphalt parking lot at the elevation of the building entrance. Between the two parking lots there is a significant change in grade, with a wooden railroad tie retaining wall and timber steps. The south drive leads around the south and east sides of the

Site Plan



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building, providing service access to the northeast side. Northeast of The Fort are metal storage lockers and the 1963 Trappers Cabin, used for building service.

Topography

The grade generally slopes down to the east and south. The grade was flattened to accommodate the building and its two-level west parking lots, as well as an expansive nonhistoric brick outdoor patio east of the building. The east patio terminates with a low plastered concrete block planter, curved in plan. Beyond the patio, the grade drops off steeply to the east. Visitors to the patio experience an expansive view east to the sandstone hogback formation and the city lights of metropolitan Denver beyond. The owners of The Fort purchased agricultural pasture property between The Fort and the hogback in order to preserve the view and to buffer the property from development. Horses graze the buffer property. A massive red sandstone outcropping just north of The Fort provides a backdrop to its architecture. The outcrop and its "Beware of Snakes" warning have been further emphasized with the addition of a large, playful metal snake sculpture set high up on the outcrop.

Exterior Walls, Doors, Windows, and Roof**West Wing**

The west wing is rectangular, about 100 feet long from north to south, and 19 feet wide. It is one story tall, except for the second-story library, an adobe enclosure above the main entrance.

The west elevation is the main entrance, facing the parking lot and State Highway 8. This elevation has a fairly solid plastered one-story adobe wall, interrupted by the 10-foot-wide main entrance near the center. The walls terminate on either side of the main entrance, which consists of a "sally port" through two pairs of carved inset wooden doors, stained brown, with wooden jambs and a wooden lintel with painted signage. The entrance is flanked by two historic black metal light sconces. The roof is a flat built-up asphalt roof on a concrete deck, with adobe parapet walls draining to two open scuppers and wooden canales with sculpted ends. The upper surface of the parapet is rounded and topped by electric-powered luminarias. The roof is supported by peeled wood vigas, twelve of which project through the wall beyond the exterior where they are cut to pointed ends.

Above the entrance there is a small one-room second story, set back slightly from the first floor west wall, and about 4 feet from the east wall. This is the library, also known as Susan Magoffin's bedroom. The library has a plastered battered adobe wall with a parapet and flat built-up roof draining north to a scupper and canale. Centered above the library roof is a small wood-framed penthouse enclosure of unpainted vertical wood board siding and a side gabled roof covered with wood shingles that is topped with a tall flagpole. In the center of the library west wall, there is one wood sash four-light casement window with a timber lintel and rounded adobe jambs and sill. The east wall of the library, facing the courtyard, has a pair of painted wood sash 9-light windows, and a decoratively carved wood panel door stained brown, with a metal sign that reads "Library". The windows and door share a large timber lintel. The library is accessed from the west wing's first floor roof.

At the northwest corner of the west wing, there is a round plastered adobe tower, called the Tower Room. The tower is about 18 feet tall and 20 feet in diameter, with a tall parapet wall extending well above the flat roof. The parapet is pierced by a series of 16 tall, narrow, evenly-spaced open "ports", as described on Lumpkins' drawings. The tower has an exterior door facing southwest. The door is set deep into the 24-inch-thick walls. It is carved wood, stained dark brown, with a wood lintel stained dark brown. The jambs are curved adobe. Adjacent to the door is a black metal wall-mounted lantern light fixture.

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The south end of the west elevation is the side of the two-story south wing. The second floor west exterior wall is set slightly back (east) of the first floor, and the transition is eased with adobe plaster. The west end of the south wing has an adobe plaster wall with two low pitch shed roofs: the taller shed roof, over the enclosed second story, slopes down to the south. The lower shed roof over the second floor balcony slopes down to the north.

The east elevation of the west wing faces the courtyard. This is a solid, plastered adobe wall, one story tall except for the second story library over the entrance, as described above. There is an original 14-foot-wide projecting wing at the north end of the west wing that projects about 6 feet into the courtyard. The west wing wall height is taller south of the sally port entrance, where it eases lower about two feet. There are 11 viga beams that support the roof and project through the wall on the courtyard side. The entrance sally port has a deep wooden lintel with a sign reading "The Fort elevation 6'100" facing the courtyard, and it is flanked by two decorative metal wall lanterns.

There are four painted wood sash divided light windows facing the courtyard, and a fifth on the north face of the west wing. The windows have flush painted wood trim, including pediment-shaped flush head trim. Three of the windows are 8/12 divided light. The windows in the projecting wing are 8/8.

South Wing

The south wing is two stories tall, rectangular in plan, approximately 140 feet long from west to east and 19 feet wide from north to south, plus an 8-foot-wide second floor balcony. The second floor stops about 20 feet short of the east end of the wing. The south side of the south wing has mechanical and electrical equipment for the restaurant, and there are numerous electrical conduits, piping, and meters exposed on this face or concealed with wood board fencing.

There is a round single-story adobe tower at the southeast corner of the south wing, enclosing the Tap Room. The tower is about 18 feet high and 20 feet in diameter, similarly detailed to the northwest tower, with 12 long narrow slots, or ports, in the tall parapet above the roof. The Tap Room tower has a window facing east, a 4-pane bronze anodized aluminum window set deeply into a curved opening, with adobe head and sill.

Unlike the east and west wings, the second story of the south wing has a shallowly-sloped asphalt shed roof, sloping down to the south, supported with dimensional lumber framing. The roof overhangs all four sides, and has exposed rafters on the north and south. The fascia is painted wood. A metal gutter and downspouts are on the south side. The second story balcony facing the courtyard has a similarly detailed shed roof, slightly lower than the main roof, sloping down to the north to a metal gutter and downspouts. Several painted metal vents and some small plastered chimneys are visible above the roof from the south.

The south elevation of the south wing is a typical plastered adobe wall. The west end of the second floor is set very slightly in from (north of) the first floor and the transition is eased with plaster. The second floor of the south elevation has four historic windows, wood sash divided light 8/8 single-hung, stained dark brown, with wood jambs and sills. The head detail is also wood, rectangular with an applied pediment shape. The east end of the second floor has a nonhistoric double-hung window. At the first floor, facing south, there are four nonhistoric bronze anodized aluminum divided light 3/3 single-hung windows with curved adobe heads, sills, and jambs. These have been infilled with diagonal wood siding, and exterior wood security grilles on decorative brackets. Also at the first floor facing south, there are two deeply inset fixed wood windows with wooden heads, adobe jambs and sills, and wood security grilles. It appears that the second and fourth windows (going from west to east)

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on the first floor were added at unknown date, based on construction photos from 1963.

The north elevation of the south wing faces the courtyard. There is a wood-framed balcony at the second floor, sheltered by a wood-framed shed roof with a stained wood board soffit, and supported by painted exposed wood beams, an 8x8 perimeter timber beam, and five two-story 8x8 painted wood posts. The balcony is carpeted over a wood board deck supported by 8x8 wood beams on a timber perimeter beam. At the east end of the balcony is a pair of original wood doors with decorative metal pulls and heavy metal hasp hardware with strap hinges. A timber stair at the east end of the balcony leads down to the courtyard level. The balcony and stairs have simple wood picket railings with top and bottom wood rails. The balcony shelters a walkway at the first floor, leading to the restaurant main entry, a decorative carved wood panel door with glazing, two fixed transom lights, decorative nonhistoric lizard-shaped pull hardware, and a wood sign above reading "Eating House".

The south wing's north elevation is an adobe wall, but the bricks are exposed and not plastered. It is the only wall facing the courtyard with abundant glazing. The first floor has three sets of four 15-light stained wood French doors with stained timber lintels. The second floor has three large door and window assemblies. Two of these have a divided light stained fixed wood sash window of 45 lights (9x5) with a decoratively carved stained wood panel door at the end. The third assembly is similar, but the assembly consists of a carved wood door flanked by a 35 light (7x5) window and a 10-light sidelight. This elevation also has two 6/6 wood sash windows painted white, with flush wood trim and flush pediment-shaped wood head trim.

At the eastern end of the south wing second floor, there are additional doors and windows that are not readily visible, above the roof of the east wing. There is also a modern wood trellis enclosing the roof deck of the east wing, accessed from the south wing second floor door.

East Wing and Additions

The east wing is one story tall and rectangular in plan. The northeast corner of this wing has been expanded with nonhistoric additions and the east patio, which were built in the 1970s and 1980s, and a screen wall built for the Summit of the Eight in 1997. The original portion of the east wing was constructed of adobe bricks with adobe plaster. The additions are constructed of concrete masonry with adobe plaster.

The east wing's west wall, facing the courtyard, is the least modified. This plastered adobe wall steps up in height at two locations. There is a scupper and wood canale near the north end of the wall, and a scupper with metal conductor and downspout near the south end. There is a pair of divided light, wood sash 8/12 windows, painted brown, with flush wood trim and flush pediment-shaped head trim. The single window near the north end is a wood sash 6/6 divided light painted brown with similar trim. Another feature near the center of the wall is a rectangular construction of vertical unpainted wood strips applied to the wall, with pediment-shaped head trim. This construction serves to disguise a metal exhaust vent in the wall.

The east wall of the east wing is that of a later addition. Originally this was an open patio that was enclosed with a wall of windows in the 1970s. It has a low pitch shed roof in asphalt that slopes to the east with a deep painted wood fascia and a deep roof overhang on the east side. There are five low-profile nonhistoric plastic skylights over the addition. The addition's wall is a window wall to take advantage of the expansive view to the east, with a plastered chimney at the south end. The east wall has two pairs of double eight-panel carved wooden doors with transom lights, and 10 bays of three

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bronze anodized aluminum windows, with horizontal wood board siding painted brown, below the windows. The east wall opens onto a nonhistoric east patio, which is curved in plan, paved with red bricks in a basketweave pattern, and defined by a curved, low, plastered concrete block planter wall. The planter contains low junipers and sage.

At the north end of the northeast addition, there is an outdoor patio with a plastered screen wall enclosure, built for the 1997 Summit of the Eight. The screen wall is curved in plan at the west end, curved at the top, steps down in height once, and contains two curved-top built-in niches, or nichos. The added north patio is paved with red brick, accessed from the north end of the restaurant, and steps down with three red brick and concrete stairs to the level of the east patio. A concrete fountain, installed in the 1980s, sits at the bottom of the stairs.

Courtyard

The courtyard is open to north and open to the sky. It is approximately 58 feet wide from east to west, and approximately 63 feet long from north to south. The courtyard is surfaced with tan-colored raked pea gravel, with red brick basketweave walks. The walks are located at the perimeter, and provide access to the entry and Trade Lodge. The courtyard is a historic character-defining feature of The Fort.

The Trade Lodge consists of a white canvas tent at the north end of the courtyard, a modern replica of George Washington's tent. Near the east wall there is a nonhistoric wooden pillory. At the west wall there is a nonhistoric horno, or adobe oven, and four wooden benches around a stone campfire ring.

Interior

The historic portions of The Fort include some interior character-defining features that help to convey its historic significance. These include concrete floors stained to emulate traditional ox-blood coloring in some locations; timber flooring; plaster walls with curved edges; exposed viga roof structure; round corner adobe fireplaces; wood board ceilings in some locations; decorative blue floral ceramic tile flooring accents; large exposed stained wooden lintels over openings; a carved wooden column with decorative corbel, or zapata; and carved wooden doors by Elidio Gonzales. The sense of history is further heightened by wooden chairs and benches carved by Gonzales and his apprentice Antonio Archeleta, in the Padre Martinez style used at the original Bent's Old Fort. Numerous piece of original artwork and historic artifacts of everyday living are displayed inside The Fort. The historic artifacts date from the Bent's Fort time period. Almost all of the artwork depicts subject matter related to the Bent's Old Fort time period in the American West.

Upon entering The Fort from the main entrance, in the east wing, the historic interior rooms have painted plaster walls and ceilings, large stained wooden headers at openings, and a concrete floor stained to emulate ox-blood coloring. The first room immediately inside the entry features a large original red brick oven, and a carved wood column with a decorative corbel. The interior has been modified extensively, but most of the nonhistoric walls are finished with rough-finished vertical wood boards and thus are distinguishable from the original walls. Original stairs down to the original bar at the southeast corner are intact, along with their stone side walls, and the original wooden bar. The southeast round tower, or Tap Room, is still intact with its adobe fireplace. This room features several original oil paintings of William Bent and his contemporaries.

The first floor of the south wing is used as a banquet room, called the St. Vrain Council room. This room features a plaster ceiling, stained concrete floor, a corner adobe fireplace, and a row of wood

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columns down the center. At the south end of the west wing is the St. Vrain Bar, with a heavy timber floor, exposed vigas, diagonal wood board ceiling, and wooden bar. The west wing room north of the sally port entrance is called the Bent Room. It features a brick floor laid in a basketweave pattern, exposed vigas and diagonal wood board ceiling. The walls in this room are exposed unplastered adobe. The Bent Room also features an extensive display of artifacts dating from the Bent's Old Fort time period.

The Library Room on the second floor of the west wing is furnished as a bedroom and interpreted to tell the story of Susan Magoffin, a pioneer woman who died at Bent's Old Fort. This room has exposed vigas and a wood board ceiling, plastered adobe walls, and carpeted floor. It contains a period 4-poster bed with handmade quilt, a wash basin, an 1846 table and iron stove for heat, various period artifacts including George Bent's trunk, and a large original oil painting of the 1780 Missouri River steamboat "Western Engineer".

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Fort, an adobe house and restaurant in Jefferson County, Colorado, is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Architecture and meets Criteria Consideration G, having achieved its significance being less than 50 years old and having achieved significance within the past 50 years. Built in 1962-63 and modeled in design and layout on the historic Bent's Old Fort, the building was constructed of adobe bricks using traditional Hispanic methods and materials. As one of few core adobe resources in Colorado outside the San Luis Valley, The Fort is exceptional for its adaptation of historic design, its association with William Lumpkins, an architect known internationally for work in adobe and the Pueblo Revival style, and for its use of traditional practices of construction and embellishment. In the context of regional adobe traditions and of reconstructed adobe buildings both before and after 1963, including the reconstruction of Bent's Fort in 1975-76, The Fort plays a significant role as a design and construction example of exceptional quality. It is being nominated at the State level of significance. (Throughout the remainder of the nomination, the 1833 Bent's Fort will be noted interchangeably as Bent's Fort, historic Bent's Fort or the original Bent's Fort; the building Sam Arnold had constructed in 1962-63 will be noted as The Fort.)

Summary History:

The Fort, a landmark of the Denver area since its completion in 1963, is located in the Red Rocks area of Jefferson County, south of the town of Morrison. Modeled on the historic fur trade site of Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River in southeastern Colorado, The Fort sits nestled among the rocks of the sandstone hogback geological formation, which marks the boundary of the Great Plains at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

The Fort was the creation of Samuel and Betty Arnold, built in 1963 as a home and restaurant, and 43 years later, remains the focus of work for Sam Arnold (henceforth "Arnold"). The descendent of eighteenth century settlers of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Arnold was raised in Pittsburgh. He left at age 16 to study at Andover Prep School, later attending Yale University where he studied English Literature. Following graduation, he returned to Pittsburgh for a year to work for a newspaper. Moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1948, Arnold found work at a radio station where he gained experience in on-air broadcasting and news and promotional writing. Married in 1948, Arnold moved with his new bride to Denver two years later, settled in the Park Hill neighborhood, and entered business in the area of advertising.¹

By 1959, the couple decided to move out of the city to the foothills. They located a 7.21 acre site just south of the town of Morrison, possessing broad vistas and a flowing artesian well. Having lived in an adobe house in Santa Fe, the Arnolds began researching adobe designs for their new home, and chanced upon two drawings of historic Bent's Fort by Lieutenant James W. Abert from the 1845-46 expedition that spent some time at the fort. The Arnolds traveled to the site of the original fort near La Junta, Colorado, then in ruins, measured the walls as possible, and contracted with noted adobe architect William Lumpkins for the formal drawings. Eventually securing financing through the Small Business Administration, Arnold completed plans for a restaurant on the first level and living quarters for his family on the upper level.²

¹ Lynne Scholfield, "Shinin' Times: The Life and Times of Sam Arnold & The Fort Restaurant" video narrative, L. S. Productions, 2003.

² Sam Arnold, Interviews by Anne. W. Bond, January 18, 2006 and February 1, 2006, Arnold home, Denver, CO.

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Determined to build in the traditional manner with adobe bricks, Arnold secured the services of a contractor from Taos, New Mexico, who brought a crew of experienced adobe workers with him. By the spring of 1962, workers were making bricks on the site, and the walls were underway. Incorporating traditional log vigas and herringbone latilla ceilings along with hand-carved doors and brackets, the building was completed within the year. In February 1963, the restaurant opened for business.³

The Arnolds lived in and operated The Fort until 1974, when Arnold and second wife Carrie Foreman Arnold sold the property and business to Jack Krohn. Krohn made changes to the interior layout and added dining room space by enclosing what had originally been a covered patio. Over the following decade, his lack of maintenance of the site and building caused significant deterioration, and the property fell into foreclosure. Arnold, who held the mortgage from Krohn, regained the property in 1986 following a long lawsuit, and returned to the restaurant business. Although the menu had from its opening featured foods of the Old West, Arnold expanded the offerings and educational aspects of the site and the business, building a national reputation for research and scholarship on the culinary history of the American West from the 1830s to the 1850s. Famed for both food and living history experiences, The Fort has welcomed international figures including James Michener, Alan Toynbee and others. In June 1997, The Fort was the site of President Bill Clinton's dinner hosting leaders of the world's industrial nations in Denver for the Summit of Eight. The Tesoro Foundation, a Colorado non-profit educational organization Arnold founded in 2000, now develops and presents public and school programs and events highlighting the history of the fur trade era and its many cultural traditions. The Arnolds have acquired more than 100 acres of adjacent land to preserve The Fort's vistas and environment.⁴ The Fort staff currently includes two full-time Hispanic maintenance employees with many years of experience in repair and maintenance of traditional adobe stucco and walls.

Architectural Significance:

The Fort is significant for its design using a historic model of regional recognition, adapted by a leading architect of adobe design, and for its construction technology using traditional methods of regional adobe building practice.

Design:

The Arnolds originally thought to build their home on the north side of the large rock outcropping, and although adobe was an option, they had not determined the house size or materials at the time of the site purchase. Doing research on adobe in the Denver Public Library, they came across two drawings by Lieutenant James William Abert of historic Bent's Fort from 1846, and decided to use the fur trade building as the model for their home design.⁵

James W. Abert (1820 – 1897), a graduate of West Point, was an officer in the Corps of Topographic Engineers and traveled west with the Corps in the mid-1840s. In the fall of 1845, he was placed in command of an exploring expedition, and selected Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River as his starting point. While awaiting final arrangements and recuperating from an illness, Abert made several drawings of the region surrounding the fort, and of the fort's plan and elevation. From a measured and annotated sketch, he created two formal images. These were published in 1846 as the frontispiece lithographic plate in Abert's final report to the government entitled *A Report of an Expedition Led by*

³ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

⁴ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06; Holly Arnold Kinney, personal communication to Anne W. Bond and site tour, January 12, 2006, Fort Restaurant, Morrison, CO.; Scholfield video.

⁵ Scholfield video.

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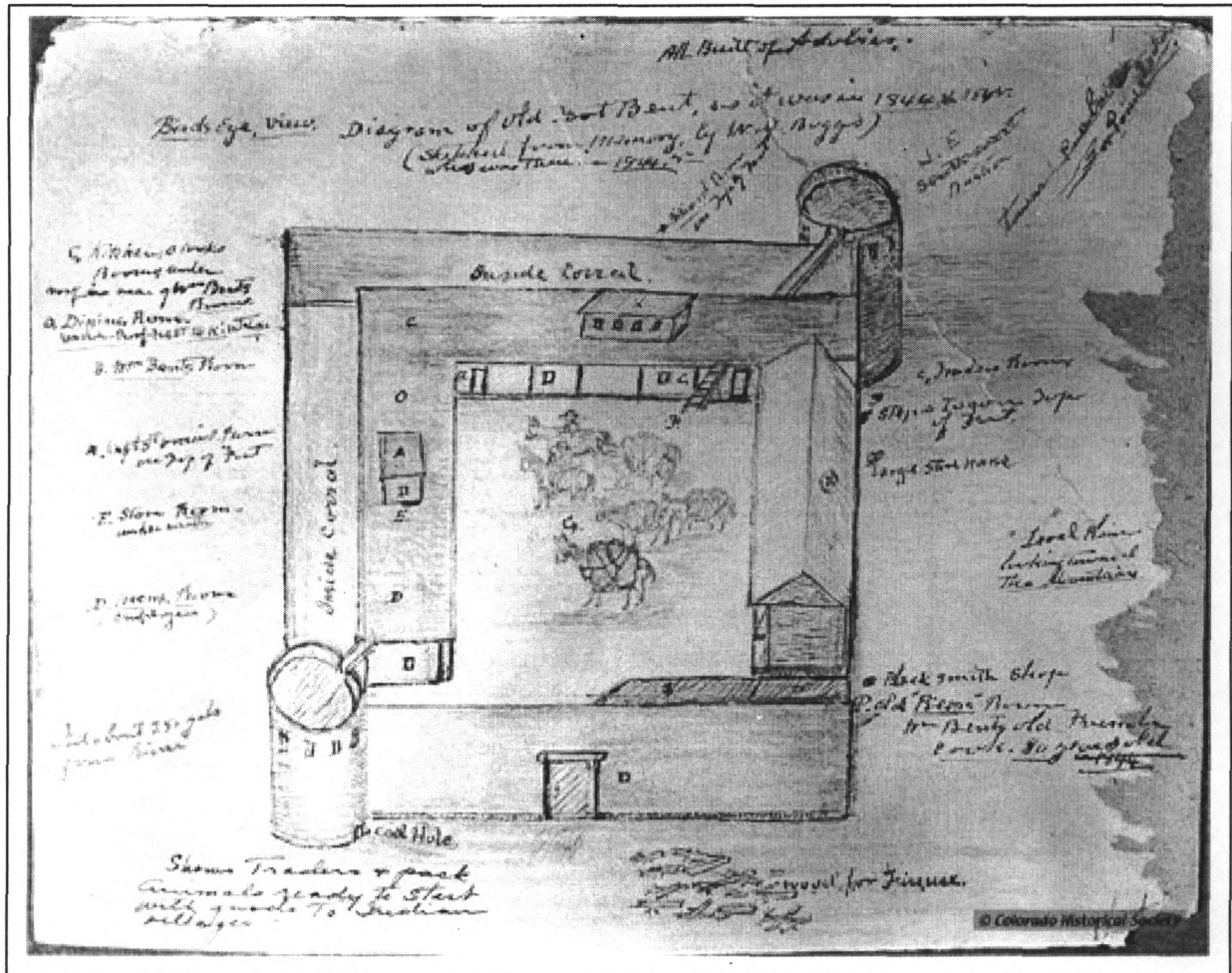
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Historic Image- Bent's Fort sketch – 1845

Image courtesy of Beinecke Library, Yale University,
www.beinecke.library.yale.edu/dl_crosscollex



Lieutenant Abert, on the Upper Arkansas and through the Country of the Camanche [sic] Indians in the Fall of the Year 1845. The plate shows two views. One is a perspective from the front side at an angle to showcase both towers and the flag above the main gate. The second view is a bird's eye, or axonometric view, in which the perspective is from above at an angle, but is dimensionally accurate.⁶ Built by the Bent brothers by about 1833, the fort was a principal trade center along the Santa Fe Trail and was the largest trading post in the mountain-plains region. William Bent hosted numerous guests, traders and explorers in the years prior to its abandonment and partial destruction in 1849. The Bent's Fort of Abert's images depicts the site at its prime.⁷

⁶ James Abert information at Abert@www.topogs.org abert

⁷ National Park Service, "Reconstructing the Castle on the Plains" brochure from Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site, 1/2006.

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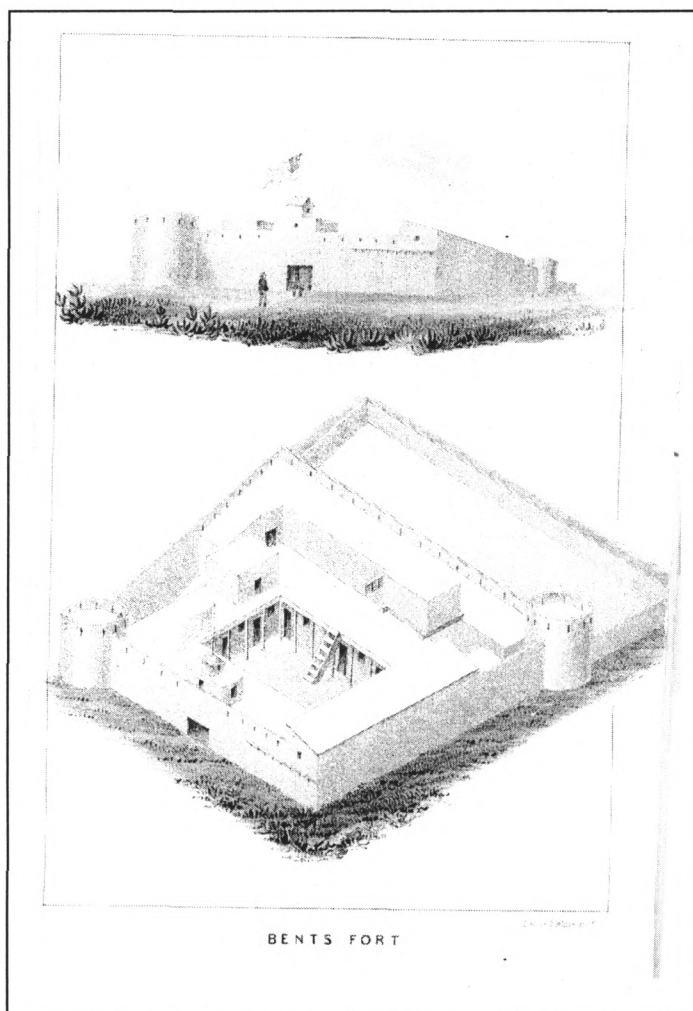
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Historic Image- Bent's Fort drawings, 1846 lithograph

Image courtesy of Beinecke Library, Yale University,
www.beinecke.library.yale.edu/dl_crosscollex



The Arnolds researched the fort and its past. From 1954 to 1960, the site of the historic fort had been the holdings of the State Historical Society of Colorado, which had purchased the site from the La Junta Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1954. In 1960, the National Park Service acquired the site, and soon thereafter, the Arnold family traveled to La Junta to view and measure the ruins. A summer archaeological project in 1954 by Professor Herbert Dick of Trinidad State Junior College had located some of the perimeter and interior walls, and had outlined these on the ground surface with new adobe blocks. Only a small portion of original wall remained. Armed with Dick's archaeological report, Arnold made as precise a set of measurements as he could, generally confirming Dick's findings of a building 138 feet by 180 feet with towers at opposing corners. Returning to Denver, Arnold began to seek financing and the project finally moved forward in 1961.⁸

⁸ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06; Scholfield video.

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Jefferson County/ ColoradoSection number 8 Page 12William Lumpkins, Architect

From his years in Santa Fe, Arnold knew of the work of architect William Lumpkins, a regionally-recognized expert in adobe and Pueblo Revival design and technique. It was reviewing Lumpkin's writings that inspired the decision to recreate the historic Bent's Fort and to build in adobe brick with traditional detailing. Lumpkins, who was at the time in practice in La Jolla, California, agreed to the job and traveled to Denver in 1961. The architect suggested siting the home on the south side of the outcropping, and then went to La Junta to visit the historic and archaeological site of the original fort. Taking measurements and photographs and making some renderings based on the Abert drawings, Lumpkins returned to La Jolla to complete the drawings for Arnold's building.⁹

William Lumpkins, born at the Rabbit Ears Ranch near Clayton, New Mexico, in 1909, was the son of a pioneer family, but he realized at a young age that ranching was not his future. When his family relocated to the Roswell area, he met two men who would become mentors to him: artist Peter Hurd and writer Paul Horgan. Much of Lumpkins' early artwork had its roots in the experience of working with Hurd and learning to depict the New Mexican landscape. He attended the University of New Mexico School of Architecture. He moved to Santa Fe and opened an architectural practice, and by the middle of the 1930s was becoming known for both his contemporary artworks and his traditional architectural designs.¹⁰ Over the decades, he would receive awards in recognition of his leadership and achievements in both art and architecture.

The fundamental principles of Gustav Stickley and the Craftsman aesthetic became guides for Lumpkins' explorations in adobe design. With its focus on simplicity and usefulness, the Craftsman approach to design was easily translated to the regional styles and construction venues of New Mexico and the Southwest. Lumpkins quickly became a leader in the revival of adobe-based regional design, and incorporated Craftsman details and conceptual ideals into a genre of Pueblo-based conceptual projects.¹¹ By the time of his death, he contributed to more than 2000 buildings in Santa Fe and surrounding areas. Merging traditional adobe building techniques with modern technology, Lumpkins was responsible for many historic preservation projects in the region, and became the foremost expert on contemporary adobe construction, authoring the adobe specifications chapter of the Universal Building Code (UBC) for national use. In addition, his interest in regional styles led to developments in the area of solar energy, and in 1972, Lumpkins co-founded Sun Mountain Design, which initiated solar energy design, innovation and demonstration projects specifically suited to the Southwestern climate and geographic conditions.¹²

Lumpkins began his design work in the Spanish Colonial Revival movement of the 1920s and 1930s, the years of his training and early professional work. Relocating to La Jolla, California, he opened a practice which at first continued in this style, but by the late 1940s, he had begun to shift into a blending of Spanish Colonial with native design attributes, developing what he would later call Spanish-Pueblo. These reflected more accurately the traditional Hispanic house forms (and furniture) and the Pueblo Indian concepts of space and form that he found in his native New Mexico. Producing drawings for numerous homes in California and the Southwest, he published *Modern Spanish Pueblo Homes* in

⁹ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

¹⁰ Living Treasures of Santa Fe website, Lumpkins biography, www.livingtreasures.kxxx.com

¹¹ Joseph Traugott, *Pueblo Architecture and Modern Adobes: the Residential Architecture of William Lumpkins*. Santa Fe, Museum of New Mexico Press, 1998; pp. ix, x.

¹² Living Treasures of Santa Fe; Arnold Interview, 2/1/06.

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1946, a book that established his leadership in this field of design.¹³ Over the next decade, he continued to explore adobe as a form and as a material, and his 1961 book *La Casa Adobe* became the noted book on the subject. In this publication and subsequent work in Pueblo-based architecture, one of Lumpkins' efforts was to articulate in his designs the internal planning of residences to the needs of modern living while maintaining the elements and concepts of Pueblo design. His *La Casa Adobe* documented the techniques of traditional construction and attributes of historic design, but it was one of Lumpkins' ongoing quests to meet functional needs of contemporary lifestyles within traditional design forms of building and space.¹⁴

When invited by Arnold to design the home in the Red Rocks area, Lumpkins accepted the commission and came from La Jolla to visit the building site and the historic site of the original Bent's Fort. The project pushed beyond his challenge of blending form and function with the additional requirements of a public restaurant within the re-creation of a historic space. With his own measurements and the historic drawings in hand, Lumpkins produced drawings for a building that re-created the historic fort, but did not replicate it, as subsequently described in some sources.¹⁵ Accommodations in design were made to fit the site and to house the restaurant requirements of the building, and adaptations in construction were necessary to meet building codes for public space use. Although he designed the building, Lumpkins never visited the site during the construction.

Lumpkins sent his drawings to Arnold by early 1962. Although the seven-sheet set of plans were undated, they are labeled:

William Lumpkins, AIA
Architect
7723 Fay Avenue La Jolla, California
Job 752
Bent's Fort Trading Post
Arnold & Co – Denver Colorado
Red Rocks Area
Jefferson County, Colorado¹⁶

Alterations by the architect from the original fort included the decision not to build the north wall in the new building. The house was sited on the south side of the large rock outcropping that dominates the site and view, and provides some shelter from the local winds. Lumpkins' drawings eliminated this north wall, allowing for an expanded courtyard area extending to the base of the rocks. He also designed a closed room where the original corral was sited at Bent's Fort; this was the first location for the restaurant's bar. The drawings show a mix of terminology reflecting both the design's origins and the restaurant plans: "plazuela", "portal" [sic], "sally port", "tap room", "vestibule", "grills", "tower", etc. Some notes on the drawings give instructions for modern amenities as these are incorporated into the design, while other notes provide specific details for the enhancement of traditional attributes of the building. The proper and expected standards for adobe walls are noted in several places, as are

¹³ Traugott, pp. 2-3.

¹⁴ William Lumpkins, *La Casa Adobe*, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Santa Fe, Ancient City Press, 1986; Traugott, p. 3.

¹⁵ Thomas J. Noel, *Buildings of Colorado*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 10.

¹⁶ William Lumpkins, "Bent's Fort Trading Post, Arnold & Co – Denver, Colorado" Architectural Plans, undated, Job 752.

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comments about woodwork and roofs. One note which was not followed was the Lumpkins recommendation for a woodcarver for the doors; Lumpkins specified "Doors – Pine as mfg by Earnest Knee – Santa Fe, New Mexico" but Arnold chose Elidio Gonzalez of Taos as the craftsman for the doors and furniture.¹⁷

Construction:

The Fort's construction technology and use of traditional regional Hispanic techniques is also exceptionally significant. While many buildings in Colorado have some element of mud-based adobe among their materials, few buildings erected since the early decades of the twentieth century have sun-dried mud-brick adobes as the core construction material.

Building began in the spring of 1962, after securing the necessary financing and receiving permits from Jefferson County, which at the time had no standards for adobe construction. The county had initially questioned the construction reliability of adobe, having had too few applications for such a material to have considered county-level regulations for construction. Officials determined to use the national UBC as a guide, only to learn from Arnold that Lumpkins had written that very chapter of the UBC manual. The permit was processed soon thereafter.¹⁸

To oversee the building of his new fort, Arnold hired Dalton Montgomery of Taos, New Mexico. An Anglo married to a Hispanic woman, Montgomery was a contractor with mostly Hispanic workers whose experience in adobe work included construction and renovation of the adobe church on the west side of the plaza in the heart of Taos, a project well known to Arnold and Lumpkins. While Montgomery was not bondable as a contractor, the quality of his adobe crews was very good, and he agreed to come to Denver to build Arnold's home.¹⁹

An important element of preparation for building was the assurance that appropriate dirt was available at the site for the making of the adobe bricks, a traditional pattern for adobe work. With the relocation of the building site from the north side of the outcropping to the south side, the broad eastern bank of the rock base was not planned for use or access. Designing the open space around the new house location required the flattening of the eastern ledge; fortunately, the dirt to be removed was suitable for the base of the adobe fabrication. The area was smoothed and the brick fabrication begun.²⁰

Montgomery arrived on site in the spring of 1962 with a crew of 20 workers. He made a test batch of adobe bricks, stacking them when dry. Unfortunately, not accustomed to the Colorado foothills spring rains, the bricks were left uncovered and the first batch ruined by the water.²¹ However, the dirt from the site was shown to be suitable for brick-making, and the team was organized for a massive brick-fabrication endeavor. Setting up what Arnold called a "brick-making factory" next to the building site, the crews were organized in teams of four. At capacity, the supervisors claimed that four men could make "1000 bricks a day if they hustle."²² Getting a slower start than anticipated, the project had only produced 4000 bricks by mid-June, as reported by a news article in the *Canyon Courier* later in the

¹⁷ Lumpkins, Architectural Plans; Holly Arnold Kinney, 1/12/06; Arnold Interview 1/18/06.

¹⁸ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Scholfield video.

²² Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

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Adobe Brick Making at The Fort Site- 1962

Image courtesy of Holly Arnold Kinney



month.²³

The matrix combined dirt, water and hay or straw in a traditional mixture. Arnold learned from studies of the original site of Bent's Fort that the Mexican builders of the original had used sheep's wool and fleece scraps as the binder, but such a material was not easily acquired for more modern use. Lumpkins had written of the use of straw in sun-dried brick of the Roman period as part of the "recipe" for adobe, and archaeologists of the region cite the predominance of straw in both antiquity and the historic period in many parts of the world. The architect recommended the historic ingredient as the most available and easily-worked component, and Montgomery's workers followed the specification.²⁴ The crews did use a bit of modern technology in the preparation of the adobe matrix for both the bricks and the later plaster. Each evening before leaving the site, dirt was amassed in a trench area and mixed with hay and straw. A hose with water from the artesian well was left running for the night to thoroughly wet the dirt. Early in the morning, a front-loader was set to work to mix the wet mass for

²³ *Canyon Courier*, "Historic Bent's Fort duplicate to be constructed near Morrison," Vol. 8, No. 26, June 28, 1962, Evergreen, Colorado.

²⁴ Lumpkins, *La Casa Adobe*, p. 1; Charlie Steen, "An Archaeologist's Summary of Adobe" in *Adobe – Past and Present*, Reprinted from *El Palacio*, Vol. 77, No. 4, Museum of New Mexico, Second Printing by University of New Mexico Printing Plant, 1974, p. 29.

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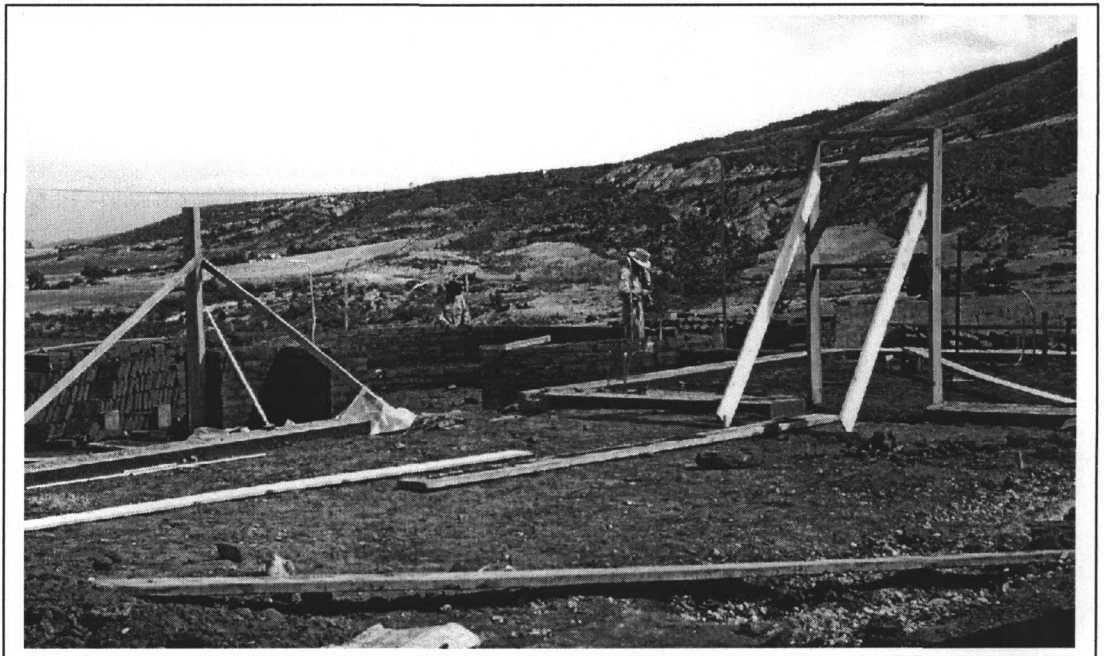
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several hours to achieve the needed tacky consistency for making the bricks. One man shuttled from the mud-pile to the brick area with a wheelbarrow, were two men labored to spread straw and set the frames. As the liquid adobe was poured into the frames, the two patted it tightly and then used a length of a 2x4 beam to shear the excess mud from the surface level of the frames. In a very short time, the bricks were dry enough to remove the frame; the crew members said that the "brick goes to sleep" as it settles. Frames either made four full-sized bricks of 10 inches by 14 inches by 4 inches each, or 16 half-bricks. Production neared 250 frames per day. After several days of drying on the straw bed, the bricks were stacked on end with space for air circulation, covered loosely with plastic, and left to "cure" for about 30 days prior to use. By the completion of construction, the crews had fabricated over 80,000 bricks on the site.²⁵

The *Canyon Courier* reporter was optimistic when in June, the paper predicted that the project would be complete by August. Construction lasted 10 months. Walls started going up in early summer of 1962, measuring 24 inches in thickness. As per code requirements specified on the Lumpkins drawings, foundations were of stabilized concrete, leveled slightly below ground surface to support the adobe walls above. Adobe bricks were laid in a pattern whereby each course of bricks was comprised of a brick length and a brick width – 14 inches plus 10 inches. The order was switched for each course to provide stability for the wall. As the wall reached the top height for the first floor, a channel was created in the center of the wall's top surface. A reinforced steel beam was inserted and encased in concrete to meet code requirements, then covered with adobe.²⁶



1962
Image courtesy of
Holly Arnold Kinney

²⁵ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

²⁶ *Canyon Courier* 6/28/62; Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

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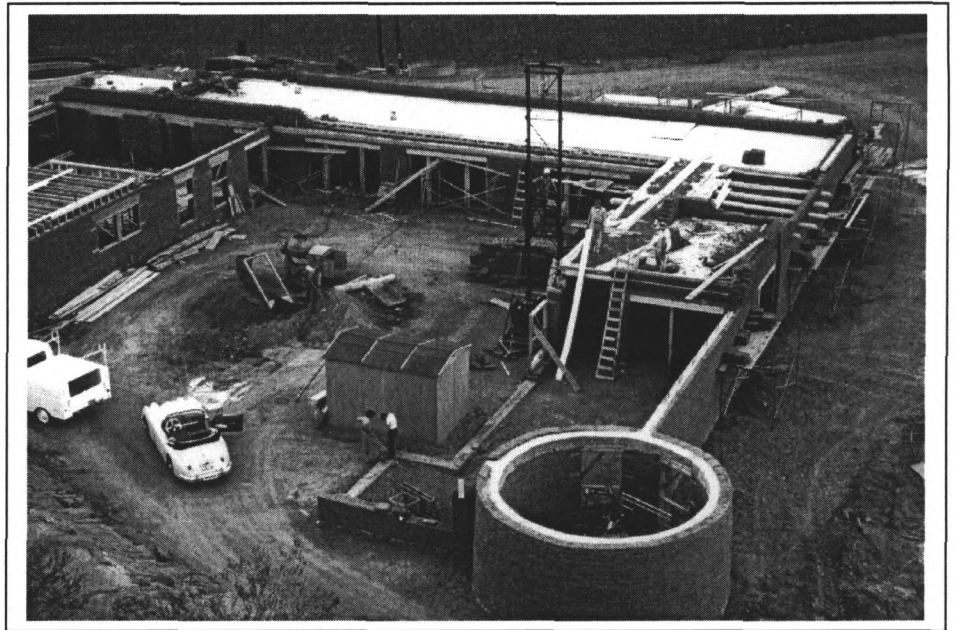
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1962

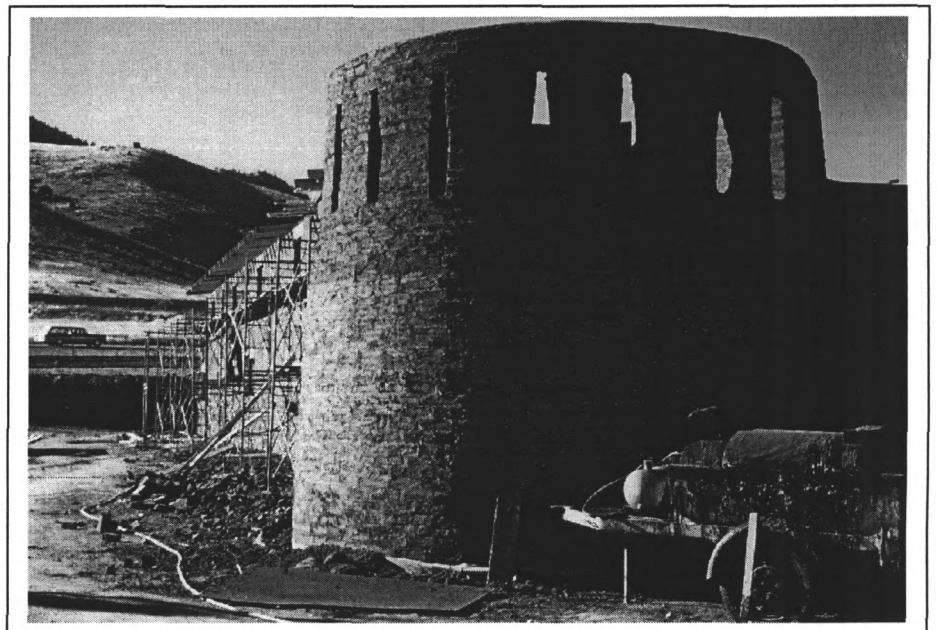
Image courtesy of Holly Arnold Kinney



Arnold reported in a letter to his parents on August 30 that they had “had virtually no rain this summer, thank goodness, for the adobes like dry weather while they’re maturing. Dalton is starting on the second floor today.”²⁷ Walls continued to rise, plaster was applied, the corner towers and bell tower began to appear, and a tar and gravel roof was laid, covered with dirt and seeded with grass and cactus to prevent wind loss. The project was about 80% complete by late November.²⁸

1962

Image courtesy of Holly Arnold Kinney



²⁷ Sam Arnold, Letter to parents August 30, 1962, in Arnold Family, Papers [manuscript] at Denver Public Library, Western History/Genealogy Department, Collection C MSS WH 1592, unprocessed, Box 7.

²⁸ Arnold Interview, 2/1/06; Holly Arnold Kinney, 1/12/06.

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In early December, Montgomery decided to leave for a short while and go hunting. Killing an antelope, he celebrated his feat so enthusiastically that he wound up in the hospital. The Taos crew members would not work if Montgomery was not the overseer, and work ground to a halt on the building. After much argument, Arnold fired Dalton, and the experienced crew left the site. Although the walls and roof were essentially completed, much work remained to be done on the doors, windows and interior finishes. Arnold hired a long-time contractor acquaintance to supervise the group of about 20 carpenters, electricians, plumbers and masons as the project pushed toward completion. Joseph A. Jancar worked at the site for over a year, managing many details and specialized tasks for months after the restaurant opened to the public.²⁹

In accord with traditional building practices for adobe buildings, The Fort roof and upper floors were supported by large log vigas, finished with both planks and latillas for the first floor ceilings. Lumpkins was careful to note on his architectural drawings specific detailing for the wood beams, brackets and vigas. The viga ends were to be shaped to a point with axe cuts, not by sawing, and hand-wielded drawknives were to be used to strip the bark to leave the characteristic blade marks visible. In addition, the planks laid over the vigas to form the first floor ceiling were detailed in the drawings with a bead strip along one edge of each plank. Latillas, laid in a herringbone pattern, were also finished by hand, and some were trimmed with carved beading.³⁰ In search of appropriate trees for the long vigas, Arnold returned to an area he had visited in 1948 as a writer for Koppers Company in Pittsburgh. One story assignment followed the saga of German prisoners of war who had been timber cutters in civilian life. They were detailed to a timber camp up St. Louis Creek above Fraser, Colorado, where they logged for the duration of World War II. Recalling his journey to Colorado and his impressions of the timber camp, Arnold sought his tall straight logs from the Fraser area, and had them prepared by hand for both vigas and planks following Lumpkins' specifications regarding traditional methods and design.³¹

Having read accounts of floor finishes in adobe buildings of the fur trade period, Arnold decided to experiment in one room of the restaurant. Instead of installing historic-design plank floors in the bar, he attempted to recreate a traditional blood floor. Dumping 15 gallons of cow blood on the poured adobe floor, he "broomed" the blood with bristle brooms until the blood soaked into the top layer. This hardened into a ¼ inch crust which was buffed to further hardness and took on a deep red-brown color. The floor lasted from the restaurant's opening in 1963 until about 1966 when a plank floor was laid over it; the fashion for women's stiletto heels was at its height and the adobe floor was repeatedly crushed in tiny points and irreparably damaged. The blood floor color was added to the poured concrete floors in some parts of the building and its exterior spaces.³²

In one aspect of the detailing for the building, Arnold did not follow Lumpkins' recommendations. The architect had noted a particular New Mexico woodworker as craftsman for the project doors and interior details; Earnest Knee of Santa Fe was cited in the architectural drawing notes as being Lumpkins' choice for manufacturing the pine doors for the restaurant and the upstairs living quarters. Instead, Arnold chose Elidio Gonzalez of Taos. Arnold had met Gonzalez in Santa Fe when the former briefly

²⁹ Joseph A. Jancar, "The Fort," single-page typed personal reminiscences, hand-dated July 1997 [7/97], in Arnold Family, Papers [manuscript] at Denver Public Library, Western History/Genealogy Department, Collection C MSS WH 1592, unprocessed, Box 8; Arnold Interview 1/18/06.

³⁰ Lumpkins, Architectural Plans.

³¹ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06.

³² *ibid.*

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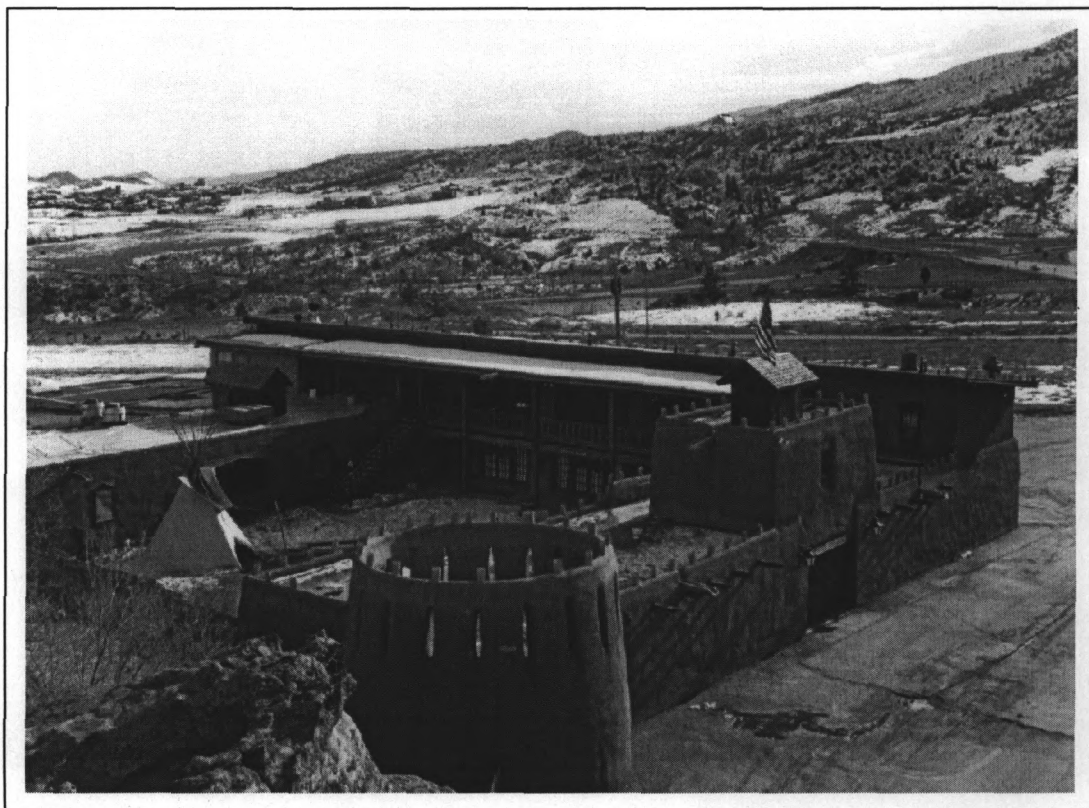
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opened a toy store and commissioned a decorative sign and pole for his shop. Gonzalez carved the pole in his furniture shop in Taos, where he also crafted furnishings for hotels, restaurants and homes in the northern New Mexico area. During the summer of 1962, Arnold traveled to Santa Fe and Taos to locate a tinsmith for the lamps and candleholders for the restaurant interior, and to order the doors from Gonzalez. While Lumpkins had sketched some door designs, Gonzalez was free to make some design changes, but the doors were to match, and, most importantly, to be completed by the end of the summer. Not arriving until late in a cold and rainy autumn, the doors featured hand-planed surfaces and carved and applied decorative trim in traditional Hispanic patterns. Later, additional doors for the site were crafted by Gonzalez' apprentice Tony Archuleta, who also helped meet Arnold's commission to the shop of all the Padre Martinez chairs and some tables for the restaurant.³³

The building was completed by January 1963 when the Arnold family (Sam, Betty and children Keith and Holly) moved into the second floor quarters. The restaurant, presenting a historic period menu and beverages, opened in mid-February. The *Denver Post* ran an extensive feature with several prominent photographs on the new dining attraction on Sunday, February 17. The writer described the historic attributes of the building calling it "one of the most unusual in America" as a "model in hand-puddled adobe bricks of Fort Bent" and extolling both the romance of the original Bent's Fort and the accuracy of the new "Foothills Adobe 'Fort'" in its construction and adherence to traditional design and workmanship.³⁴



The Fort upon
completion, 1963
Image courtesy of Holly
Arnold Kinney

³³ Arnold Interview, 1/18/06; Holly Arnold Kinney, 1/12/06; Arnold letter 8/30/62.

³⁴ *Denver Post*, "Foothills Adobe 'Fort' Opens" February 17, 1963.

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Jefferson County/ ColoradoSection number 8 Page 20**Architectural Context**

The Fort is significant for its design and construction in the context of other fort reconstructions in Colorado, and for its character-defining features of the Pueblo Revival style.

Reconstructions:

Between the mid-1930s and the mid-1970s, public entities "reconstructed" three buildings at historic adobe fort sites in Colorado. Fort Vasquez and Bent's Fort were rebuilt on their original sites as adobe brick fur trade forts, while Fort Garland's reconstructed Company Quarters was built of concrete block and plaster on original foundations. Arnold's The Fort is significant in the sequence of these reconstructions and in its influence on later work.

Fort Vasquez Trading Post, one of the famed "Four Forts of the South Platte," was built in 1835 by fur trader Pierre Louis Vasquez and his partner Andrew W. Sublette in an effort to expand trade and commerce with Plains Indians of the region. Sited on a low plateau overlooking the South Platte River, the fort commanded a sweeping westward view across the river and toward Long's Peak and the Rocky Mountains. The original fort, 100 feet by 100 feet square of adobe walls enclosing eleven interior rooms and broken by entrances on the north and south, wrapped around a central plaza. Visitors to the site noted its living quarters, trade rooms, barn, storage areas and animal stalls. Guard towers were located on two corners and the walls were pierced for rifle ports. The fort played an active role in regional trade until the failure of the Vasquez-Sublette partnership in 1842. The building was abandoned and slowly deteriorated.³⁵

Over 90 years later, the fort was the focus of local interest and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was assigned to rebuild the fort on its original site as an educational facility commemorating the fur trade history of the region. By this time, the route of Highway 85 passed the site along the eastern flank of the fort, at a slight eastward angle from south to north. Comparatively little remained of the original walls, however, the sandstone foundations lay under the ground surface. As work began, WPA crews made the adobe bricks on the site, using the dirt that had eroded from the historic walls as the first source of material for the new building. In doing so, they obliterated all above-ground evidence of the original fort. No archaeological testing was done to ascertain specifics of the historic walls or locations. The reconstruction was adapted in size, shape and location to the 1930s configuration of the site, including a shift of the entire fort 8–12 feet to the west and an angling of the east wall from south to north-north-west in alignment with the adjacent highway. In addition, only a south entrance was opened for visitor access. Archaeological investigations at the site followed the Colorado Historical Society's acquisition of the site in 1958. Excavations in 1963, 1966 and 1967 revealed the differences between the original and reconstructed forts. Although made with adobe bricks and plaster, the new fort's materials were considerably rougher in dirt texture than the original and the loss of most brick levels prohibited the WPA from using the historic patterns of brick-laying as the walls were raised.³⁶

As a predecessor to the construction of The Fort as a re-creation of Bent's Fort, the Fort Vasquez reconstruction differed in significant ways. Importantly, Fort Vasquez was built on the original site and, in most of the north and south walls, actually overlies the original sandstone foundations. However, the design and plan of the reconstructed Fort Vasquez varies from the original in many important ways

³⁵ "Fort Vasquez Trading Post, Weld County, Colorado" National Register of Historic Places nomination, prepared by staff Colorado Historical Society, 2000, on file, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, Denver.

³⁶ *ibid.*

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owing to a lack of either archaeological testing prior to the WPA work and to the absence of any visual images of the historic trading post. The WPA and local historians of the 1930s who participated in the reconstruction of the fort had only brief written citations from contemporary sources as their guides to the fort's layout and exterior appearance, and their interpretations of the historic fort's details were partially incorrect. In contrast, The Fort was built in a different place and physical environment from its original, and the decision not to build the north wall was a deliberate adaptation to the site in the Red Rocks area of Jefferson County. However, the existence of 1840s images of the original Bent's Fort provided a more accurate guide to the exterior appearance, details and interior spaces for The Fort than was available to the WPA in Weld County.

Within five or six years of completion of Arnold's The Fort and its opening to the public as a restaurant, the Colorado Historical Society (the Society) completed a reconstruction of one of the buildings at historic Fort Garland in Costilla County in the San Luis Valley. One of few surviving adobe military posts from the middle of the nineteenth century, this post was begun in 1858 and remained in operation occupied by the United States Army until its decommissioning in 1883. By the time the Society acquired the site in 1945, most of the original 20-23 buildings had been lost to deterioration or intentional dismantling for reuse. The five remaining buildings that were structurally sound were restored, receiving replacement adobe bricks, new roofs, windows, floors, plaster, interior fittings and utilities, and were put to use for the operation of a museum at the site. Missing from the Parade Ground, however, were two small officer quarters buildings on the north side and both large Company Quarters, which formed the south side and flanked the main gates to the historic military post. By the mid-1960s, the Society had need of both additional space for the museum and for the creation of a "closed" Parade Ground to enhance the visitor experience of the historic post. With the exception of some archaeological surface survey by excavation teams housed at Fort Garland but digging the site of predecessor Fort Massachusetts, no archaeological study of the fort's buildings had been done.

With little notice, the Society determined to erect "reconstructed" Company Quarters on the west portion of the south side of the grounds. Arriving with bulldozer crews, the workers dug through the remains, poured concrete foundations and laid concrete cinderblock walls, covering these with concrete plaster and a bright-orange paint, and topping the whole with a flat tar and gravel roof. The building's interior layout was generally that of several historic plans of the original building, but the addition of wood plank floors hid the structurally altered foundation of the new building. Administratively, from the perspective of a small state-government agency, these construction decisions, based on speed, ease of construction, direct expenses, long-term maintenance costs, and functional flexibility, allowed the Society to vary the uses and internal configurations of the museum building. However, the destruction of the original foundations, shown to survive just inches under the ground surface for other missing buildings of the original fort, was a permanent loss.³⁷

Unlike Fort Vasquez, Fort Garland had been the subject of both artists' sketches and photographs from its earliest years. Many of these depicted the west Company Quarters and the historic appearance of the building is well-documented. The first known image of Fort Garland, an 1859 drawing by a soldier, is done from the southwest corner of the Parade Ground with the Company Quarters filling the right portion of the illustration. Likewise, several plats of the fort detail the location and dimensions of the building, and both building-specific and broad landscape photographs of the fort and its buildings range

³⁷ Fort Garland, Regional Museums Operations Files, Colorado Historical Society Department of Material Culture and Division of Facilities Management staff files, Colorado Historical Society, Denver; Anne W. Bond, Fort Garland Research Files, unpublished, in possession of author, Denver.

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in date from the mid-1860s to the fort's abandonment in 1883. The Society knew exactly how the building appeared during the historic period, and decided to closely evoke, if not replicate this exterior appearance with the reconstruction. Like The Fort, historical depictions enabled a modestly accurate look; however, the choice of cinderblock and concrete as the structural material is visually obvious and is in sharp contrast to The Fort's use of traditional construction technology, ironically the same technology used to construct all original buildings of Fort Garland beginning in 1858.³⁸

Twelve years after the opening of The Fort in Morrison, the National Park Service (NPS) began a full reconstruction of Bent's Fort. The site had been marked as early as 1912 by the La Junta Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, who received the acreage with ruins in 1920 from farm owner A. E. Reynolds. The organization sold the site to the Colorado Historical Society in 1954, and that summer, archaeological investigations were undertaken. Within three years, national interest in the site led to discussions with the NPS, and in 1960, ownership was transferred, and the fort was designated a national historic site within the national park system. Research became a priority as the NPS proposed plans for eventual reconstruction of the historic fort. Further archaeological excavations in 1963 verified the location of interior room walls and significant artifacts in addition to construction evidence.³⁹

Interestingly, by 1965, a final decision regarding reconstruction was still pending. The general policy of the NPS was to stabilize and preserve remains, so this proposal for reconstruction was a departure from the usual approaches to historical and archaeological sites. A team of senior NPS officials convened to determine whether to build or not, but the panel of experts split evenly for and against the plan. Opposition was based on the lack of all necessary historical details regarding the original fort, and the inevitable destruction of any and all remains of the fort as a result of the reconstruction. The debate continued until 1974 when legislation for reconstruction was passed and signed.⁴⁰

Arnold's The Fort had by this time hosted the chief architect of the NPS, who "walked in the gates and was astonished" by what he saw. He met with Arnold and asked numerous questions about the construction, adobe bricks, plaster, mortar, and assembly of the walls. According to Arnold, the architect seemed "amazed at the amount of really good detailing" and took extensive notes about the decorative as well as construction elements of The Fort.⁴¹

Construction by the NPS began in late spring of 1975, and followed many of the traditional methods utilized by The Fort crews 13 years before. Excavation areas had remained open, with the few remaining wall segments exposed to their adobe bricks, shown in a *Denver Post* image from November 1974. A front-load tractor mixed the materials into the adobe matrix, which was then loaded into a custom-built brick-shaping machine, capable of manufacturing 4000 bricks per day. A total of 160,000 bricks, each 4 inches by 9 inches by 18 inches were made on the site. Laid upon a poured concrete foundation and surrounded by concrete sub-flooring, the walls slowly rose above the originals. Cottonwood trees provided the vigas and ponderosa pine the latillas, and all woodwork and hardware was hand fashioned. Newspapers of the region followed the construction from the beginning of the process. The *Pueblo Chieftain* assured readers in August 1975 that "Bent fort Will stay Authentic [sic]"

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ National Park Service brochure.

⁴⁰ James Abarr, "Reconstruction of Fort Took 56 Years of Effort" from *Albuquerque Journal Online*, March 18, 2001, at www.abqjournal.com/venue/travel.

⁴¹ Arnold Interview, 2/1/06.

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with the site's historian Dwight Stinson, Jr. quoted to confirm that "every attempt will be made to rebuild the fort as it originally was." While he noted that wool would be used as the traditional binder in the adobe matrix, straw was ultimately selected, and the modern building security requirement of steel framing in the wall structure was followed.⁴² Fifty-six years after the D.A.R. acquisition of the site, and as one celebration event of the nation's Bicentennial, Bent's Fort reconstruction was completed and dedicated above the banks of the Arkansas River.

The Fort served as a model for the reconstruction of its own model, Bent's Old Fort along the Santa Fe Trail. While the 1975-76 effort near La Junta was financed by federal agencies and was preceded by years of archaeological and historical research, the primary documentation about the original building was the same as that which guided Arnold in his construction in Jefferson County. Arnold's sharing of his experiences with the design and construction assisted the NPS in its planning, and in essence, many of the same adaptations and traditional construction techniques were employed. Arnold's Fort is important for its contribution to the NPS's later work at Bent's Fort.

Pueblo Revival:

The Fort may be classified as an excellent example of the Pueblo Revival architectural style in its vernacular form. The style takes its name from the traditional building patterns of the native peoples of the American Southwest, in particular the Pueblo and Hopi groups of New Mexico and Arizona. In some areas, the style was alternately called the Southwest Indian Revival or the Hopi Style. Credit for development and the first introduction of the style is given to Boston architect A. C. Schweinfurth whose hotel in Montalvo, California, in 1894 is the first documented expression of Pueblo design attributes in a contemporary work. With its early manifestations in the first decade of the twentieth century in parts of Colorado, the style reached its height of popularity from the late 1910s through the 1930s in New Mexico and Southern California. Many of the early Pueblo Revival examples were public buildings, such as college buildings, schools, hotels, stores, service stations and restaurants.⁴³

In its highly-elaborated venue, the Pueblo Revival includes some features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style, including tiled roofs, curvilinear shaped gables, arcades, rounded-arch entryways and window openings, low-pitched hip roofs, wrought iron balconies and ornamented bell-towers. However, the style as developed in New Mexico and Colorado, and in California for smaller residential construction, featured simpler design elements. Defining features of Pueblo Revival were those which imitated the native buildings: stucco finishes, minimally-sloped or flat roofs, parapet walls, roof drains called "canales" and projecting roof support beams known as "vigas," uneven wall surfaces, and rounded corners. While made to resemble the native mud-baked adobe of New Mexico and Arizona, most Pueblo Revival buildings were constructed of concrete block and stucco, finished with broad, heavy surface texture.⁴⁴

Colorado examples of Pueblo Revival architecture are varied in approach and function, many being public buildings, and several incorporate attributes of the Spanish Colonial Style into the Pueblo

⁴² *Denver Post*, "Bent's Old Fort Begins New Life," November 11, 1974; *Pueblo Chieftain*, "Bent Fort Will Stay Authentic," August 18, 1975; National Park Service brochure.

⁴³ Lester Walker, *American Homes: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Domestic Architecture*, New York, Black Dog and Leventhal Publishers, 2002, p. 198.

⁴⁴ Walker, P. 198-199, 210; Colorado Historical Society, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, 2nd Edition, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Denver, 2003, p. 31.

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Revival ensemble. In southern Colorado, such examples as the Colorado Company Store in Morley and the Navajo service station in Aguilar display features of the style. In Aguilar, multiple rows of vigas define the first floor ceiling height, with a second row at the base of the wall parapets. The stucco exterior is smooth with the base of the wall reinforced with sloping attached buttresses. The flat roof is unadorned and the corners of the building are softly rounded. In Morley, a low central building is flanked by multi-story sections, one a three-story tower with the other featuring a covered porch set back from the façade. Vigas extend from the wall below the parapets on all elevations and heavy beams support the porch and entrance portico. The flat roofs are set below the wall parapets and the plaster surfaces are smoothed. Designed by Isaac Hamilton Rapp about 1910, the building blends the Mission Style tower elements with the Pueblo Revival approach. A third example is the two-story Visitor Center and Pueblo Concession House at Red Rocks Park in Jefferson County, within miles of The Fort. Designed by W. R. Rosche in 1931, the building complex combines a parapet in the Mission Revival style with vigas and parapets of the Pueblo Revival style on the façade.⁴⁵

Several significant Pueblo Revival buildings in Colorado are of stone, not stucco, yet exhibit important features of the style. At the Colorado State Fairgrounds in Pueblo, a series of stone buildings constructed by the WPA carry elements of the Pueblo Revival approach, including parapets, flat roofs, rounded corners and straight-headed window and door openings. More elaborate are the buildings of the Mesa Verde National Park Headquarters Complex. This group of core buildings, consisting of a museum, post office, ranger dormitory, superintendent's residence, headquarters office and community building built starting in 1921, was the work of archaeologist Jesse Nusbaum and the National Park Service Branch of Planning and Design. While the principal building material is sandstone, the details of protruding vigas, latillas, lintels, squared beams, flat roofs, parapet walls, portales, stepped wall extensions and straight-headed window and door openings define the Pueblo Revival style of design.⁴⁶

One of the most prolific and creative designers of the Pueblo Revival style beginning in the 1930s was architect William Lumpkins. Beginning his career in his native New Mexico, he began work in Santa Fe, where the city's new artistic awareness brought artists and designers of many media to the region. The early decades of the twentieth century witnessed the restoration of many historic buildings in Santa Fe, including the Palace of the Governors. In tandem with the growing interest in Spanish Colonial Revival designs, many remodeled and new buildings featured new decorative details not particularly traditional to the New Mexico patterns. Lumpkins was one of the first to consciously blend the Spanish elements with the Indian, and called his approach the Spanish-Pueblo style. Much of his work was residential, and he organized space around the open central courtyard, a significant feature of design in both Spanish and Pueblo Indian internal space. He carefully incorporated elements such as vigas, latillas, portales, and wooden door and window treatments in historic patterns. In 1946, his collection of residential building plans *Modern Spanish Pueblo Homes* was a significant contribution to this style.⁴⁷

By the late 1950s, Lumpkins, then in practice in La Jolla, California, shifted his focus to a more pure interpretation of the Indian cultural building traditions, and continued to experiment with passive solar design. His first passive solar home in El Capitan, New Mexico, in 1935 had been a landmark, and several decades later he recalled that work in his design approach. By 1961, he had completed enough

⁴⁵ Denver Public Library, www.photoswest.org/Morley; Colorado Historical Society, p. 31.

⁴⁶ Laura Soulliere Harrison, *Architecture in the Parks National Historic Landmark Theme Study*, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1986, p. 212, 226.

⁴⁷ Traugott, pp. x, 1.

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work in the Pueblo-focus design arena that he was able to collect his work and discuss his ideas in *La Casa Adobe*. It was this work that established his leadership in the design of vernacular Pueblo Revival design and in the use of traditional techniques of core adobe construction in the region. Many of the elements of his work by 1961 were incorporated into the defining attributes of The Fort the following year.⁴⁸

Lumpkins included in The Fort plans many of the significant character-defining attributes of the Pueblo Revival style. Although attempting to recreate a known and partially-documented historic building from the 1830s, Lumpkins not only adapted the layout and design of the original plan to the site in the Red Rocks area of Jefferson County, but highlighted the design with specific details typical of Pueblo Revival architecture. Vigas protrude from below parapet walls and are finished on their ends with axe-chopped points (as opposed to sawn flat ends). The building itself, of abode brick, displays the slight un-evenness of the plaster over the bricks and is hand-smoothed. Flat roofs over the first floor and in the tower are covered with dirt, while the batten siding and sloped roof of the bell tower is centered over the main gate entrance. The second floor opens onto a covered porch running the width of wing, supported by hand-planed logs and protected by a stick railing. Inside, the vigas are exposed in the ceiling and are hand-planed. Two traditional ceiling elements are visible; sawn planks are laid over the vigas and display traditional beading patterns on their edges, while in another room, hand-planed latillas span the vigas in a herringbone pattern. Corner fireplaces and several interior walls are finished with stucco and plank floors cover packed adobe surfaces. The Fort is an outstanding example of Lumpkins's work in melding a historic plan with the distinctive finishing details of the Pueblo Revival style.

Exceptional Significance:

The Fort is exceptionally significant under Criterion C and Criteria Consideration G of the National Register of Historic Places. In its design, it exemplifies the later vernacular expression of the Pueblo Revival style. As the work of one of the masters of the Pueblo Revival approach to residential design, The Fort is the most noteworthy of the works of William Lumpkins in the early 1960s and in Colorado. The building shows exceptional approaches to design details within the context of a historic re-creation, and shows Lumpkins' careful adherence to historical accuracy in the re-creation while highlighting aspects of the Pueblo Revival aesthetic.

In addition, The Fort is exceptionally significant for its use of traditional construction methods of Hispanic culture in New Mexico and the Southwest. True to the original construction of Bent's Fort in the 1830s, The Fort utilizes core adobe brick technology, with hand-formed bricks, hand-applied plaster, hand-crafted window, door and interior details, and hand-planed vigas, ceiling planks and latillas. Employing New Mexican woodworkers and adoberos ensured accuracy of historic techniques. The building is faithful to the traditional work, only deviating from historic patterns for foundations and structural stabilization, adapted in adherence to required modern construction codes for safety and security; these adaptations, however, are hidden inside the adobe brick walls and are not visible on exterior or interior of the completed building.

Finally, The Fort is exceptionally significant for its role in the revival of interest and workmanship in vernacular design and construction of traditional Pueblo and Hispanic regional architecture. The Fort strongly influenced the later reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort by the National Park Service. Its

⁴⁸ Traugott, pp. 2-3; Lumpkins, *La Casa Adobe*, pp. 1-2.

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construction in 1962 was on the front end of the Colorado rediscovery in the 1970s of vernacular Hispanic architecture both in design and materials use. Lumpkins' work in passive solar adobe construction became the basis for architectural work in both adobe and passive solar development in the state and region.

The Fort contributed significantly in all three areas and played a role in a growing interest in cultural preservation of the built environment of the region. As a privately-owned, public-access building in a vernacular Pueblo Revival style, it was made in a traditional manner, using long-known craft technology and reintroducing aspects of that craft to the more urban areas of the state. The Fort is an exceptional and early example of cultural preservation of an historic regional architecture in both design and construction.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

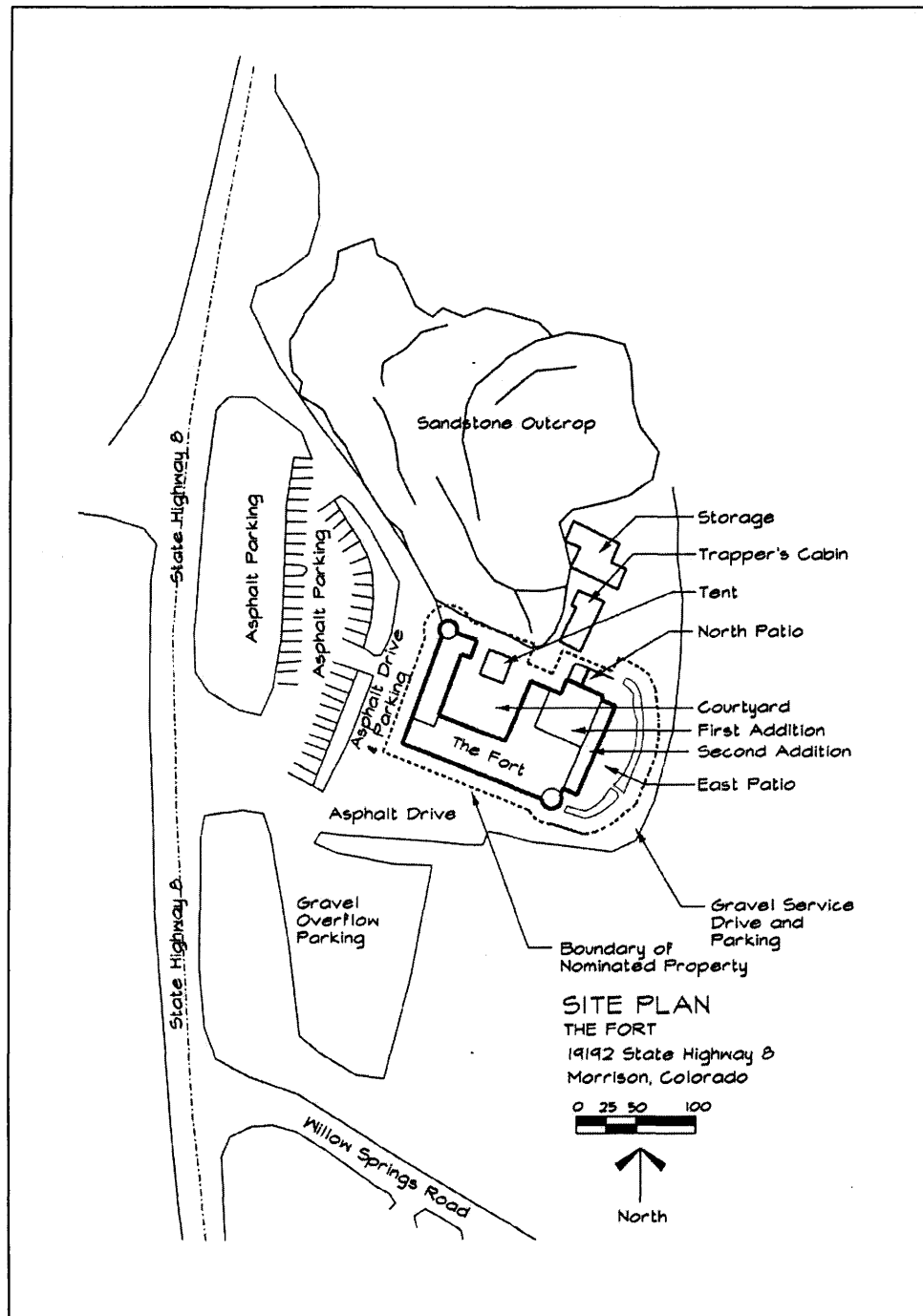
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated boundary is indicated by the dotted line on the to-scale map shown below.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated boundary includes the parcel of land directly associated with the structure of The Fort.

Boundary Map



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The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-10 except as noted:

Name of Property: The Fort
Location: Jefferson County, Colorado
Photographer: Leonard Lingo
Date of Photographs: February 20, 2006
Negatives: Digital files submitted to the National Register, Washington, DC

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 The Fort- Looking southeast from above.
- 2 The Fort- West elevation and boulder, view to east.
- 3 The Fort- West elevation, view to east.
- 4 The Fort- East elevation, view to west.
- 5 The Fort- East wall of west wing from second floor of south wing; snake on boulder, horno, and campfire in courtyard, view to west.
- 6 The Fort- North side of south wing, view to northwest, taken from boulder.
- 7 The Fort- detail of adobe brick.
- 8 The Fort- South elevation, view to north.
- 9 The Fort- Interior, "Bent Room" looking north.
- 10 The Fort- Interior, "Tap Room" (southeast corner turret) looking south.

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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Morrison Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

UTM: Zone 13 / 483529E / 4386365N
PLSS: 6th PM, T5S, R70W, Sec. 11
NW¼, SW¼, NW¼, SE¼
Elevation: 6165 feet

