

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION, GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

REGION: Rocky Mountain      PARK/AREA NAME: Glacier National Park      PARK NUMBER: 1430

STRUCTURE NAME: Apgar Fire Lookout      STRUCTURE NUMBER: 582

LOCATION OF STRUCTURE:      QUADRANGLE NAME: McGee Meadow, MT  
 Zone Easting Northing      QUADRANGLE SCALE: 7.5-minute  
 UTM A: 11 720090 5377970

CLASSIFICATION:		NUMBER OF RESOURCES:		
OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:	CATEGORY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	Buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> District	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/> Public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	Structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	Objects
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/private & public	<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	TOTAL

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

The Apgar fire lookout is a two-story, square, frame building with asphalt shingles on a pyramidal hip roof, with each story containing 196 square feet. The structure is set on a concrete and stone foundation and has lapboard siding. The lower level has solid walls with an entry. The upper level is reached by a stairway, has double pane windows on four sides, and is surrounded by a frame catwalk. The structure is in good condition, needing paint and some mortar in the foundation. This lookout is a standard, wood frame, 14x14-ft. house set on a 10-ft. tower with catwalk. The basic plan, originally designed by the United Forest Service, was often modified and revised by both Forest and Park Service engineers. The Apgar lookout has good integrity of materials, design, and workmanship and is significant in the architectural history of Glacier Park.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1930

The Apgar lookout oversees the Lake McDonald region, the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, and the Glacier National Park administrative headquarters at Belton. The importance of the location is apparent, considering two lookouts have occupied this site. Ironically, within two weeks of Apgar's completion in 1929, it was destroyed by fire. The park appropriated emergency funds and once again, the following spring, construction crews transported all materials up the steep, narrow trail and built a lookout identical to the first. The cost of the second Apgar lookout, the present building, totalled \$1,018.31.<sup>1</sup> This fire lookout is one of several similar buildings constructed in Glacier National Park between the late 1920s and the early 1940s to protect park lands from the always critical threat of fire. A planned network of lookouts within the Park and on adjoining national forest lands allowed reciprocal surveillance of both areas. The series of lookouts in Glacier succeeded for many years in curtailing disastrous fires in the park. Today, air observation allows a more comprehensive coverage of the park and has replaced the manned lookout almost entirely. The Apgar lookout is significant because it illustrates an important aspect in the management and conservation of timber resources in Glacier National Park.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Apgar fire lookout is a significant resource both architecturally and historically. It meets the eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria a and c.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE:

<sup>1</sup>Superintendent's Annual Report, 1929, Glacier National Park, p. 8.

FORM PREPARED BY:

DATE: June 1984

NAME/TITLE:

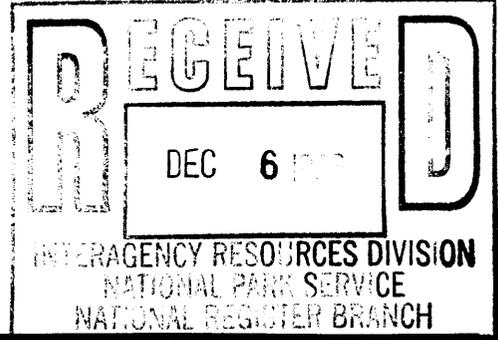
ORGANIZATION: Historical Research Associates, P.O. Box 7086, Missoula, MT 59807-7086

*Mr 2/3/85*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Apgar Lookout (addendum), Flathead County, MT.



#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 80. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official/Title

12.5.95  
Date

National Park Service  
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property 1 meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

[Signature]  
Signature of commenting or other official

SEP 29 1995  
Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency or bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (explain) Additional Documentation Accepted	<u>Mary M. Lapsley</u>	<u>1/19/96</u>

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### Building Interior

The Apgar Lookout is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Additional documentation is provided below for the purpose of describing and evaluating the interior for integrity and significance.

### 7. Narrative Description

#### Summary

Fire lookouts were generally constructed from standardized building packages, packed to the lookout site for assembly. Most were also constructed following the mid-1920s increase in lookout-construction appropriations and prior to the 1930s advent of aerial fire detection and suppression. This use of standard plans and the short construction period resulted in a remarkable degree of uniformity in interior design, not only in park lookouts but also in contemporaneous lookouts built on the forests of the USFS Northern Region. Paneled or vertical-plank doors (like the windows, paired with full-length "storms") provided access. In a classic case of design following function, large multi-light awning windows dominated all four elevations; painted 2" to 4" tongue-and-groove planks covered the small expanse of exposed interior wall. Floors were generally finished with painted 3-inch to 6-inch softwood. Fixed furnishings included the critical and centrally located fire finders, a wood-burning stove, a small cot, a wood table and chair(s), and wall-mounted cupboards located above the window banks, near the ceilings. Ceilings were either open/exposed truss or, if dropped, finished with painted tongue-and-groove planks and containing a hinged door leading to the "attic" storage space. Food and equipment storage areas in the "basement" were unfinished and accessed by vertical-board or paneled wood doors.

#### Apgar Lookout (#582), 1930

As befits its function, ribbons of two-light windows dominate the interior of this small building. Three-inch floorboards, painted grey and paired with 4" baseboards, cover the floors. The same 3" planks (either shiplap or tongue-and-groove), painted white, cover the walls and ceiling. A 6" board is bolted to all four walls above the windows. A trap door, also constructed of 3" planks, provides access to the attic storage space. Two-inch boards frame all windows and the three-panel/one-light door.

Fixed furnishings include a free-standing shelt unit, a painted bench, a small refrigerator, Coleman lanterns, a four-burner hot point electric range, and the centrally located aledaide or "fire finder," mounted on a wood stand. Shelving units are located high on the walls, above the windows.

The basement storage area, created by the elevated construction of the primary component, is finished with a concrete floor and plywood walls and ceiling.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

The interior is unmodified and contributes to the building's significance.

### Photographs

Weather was extreme at the time of survey and insufficient light was available for photographs.