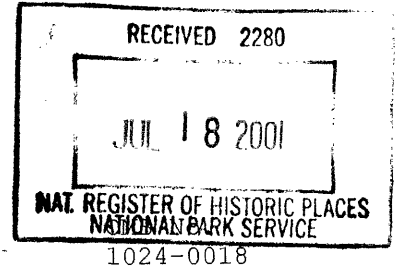


NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

920



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

WESTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

historic name: Weston County Courthouse  
other names/site number 48WE1160

2. Location

street & number 1 West Main not for publication   
city or town Newcastle vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Wyoming code WY county Weston code 045  
zip code 82701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 XX meets the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard A. Clout

Signature of certifying official

July 9, 2001

Date

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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the  
    National Register  
    \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the  
    National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

9/1/01

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  0  </u> Total

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

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

=====

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Government, County Courthouse Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Government, County Courthouse

Sub: Law Library  
Court Records  
Public Health Nurse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival - Neo-Classical "Renaissance Revival" with "Beaux Arts" influence.

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete and sandstone  
roof Frame, with asphalt shingles  
walls Sandstone and brick  
other \_\_\_\_\_

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

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

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

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form  
Weston County Courthouse  
Newcastle, Weston County, Wyoming (Page 4)

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/government

Period of Significance September 1909 -1950

Significant Dates February 10, 1910-Laying of cornerstone  
October 20, 1911-Visit of President Taft

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder C. A. Randall, Architect and Builder  
M. J. Williams, Builder  
Sundstrom Family, Stonemasons

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Weston County Courthouse  
Anna Miller Museum  
Weston County Library

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

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

Zone	Easting	Northing
1. <u>13</u>	<u>564093</u>	<u>4856179</u>

Verbal Boundary Description

The Weston County Courthouse is bounded on the east by Summit Street, on the South by Main Street, on the west by the Weston County Library and grounds, and on the north by what was originally an alley and is now a parking lot.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is on the original grounds upon which the courthouse was constructed in 1911. This includes Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, Original Town of Newcastle, Weston County, Wyoming. It is located in the E1/2 of the SE1/4, NW1/4, NE1/4, Section 2, T45N, R61W. See Map.

---

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Mary Capps, Bobby Jo Tysdal, Paulette Thompson, Lucille Dumbrill, Liz Barritt,  
Nominating Committee

Organization: Weston County Historic Preservation Board

Date: July 1, 2000

Street & number: 401 Delaware

Telephone: (307) 746-4188

city or town: Newcastle

State: WY zip code: 82701

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets:** See attached 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  
numerous resources. See attached. or

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property are attached.

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

---

Property Owner

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

name: Weston County, Wyoming, Board of County Commissioners, Ted M. Elliott, Chairman

street & number: 1 West Main

telephone: (307) 746-4744

city or town: Newcastle

state: WY

zip code: 82701

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The Weston County Courthouse is a two-story Classical Revival building with Beaux Arts details designed by Wyoming architect Charles A. Randall and constructed in 1910-1911. It faces south and sits on a prominent corner at the top of West Main Street, the large cupola visible from many locations throughout the town of Newcastle. The original flat-roofed, rectangular-shaped building rests on a raised, rusticated sandstone basement. The sandstone continues through the first story where it is separated from the brick second story by a projecting flat stone beltcourse that surrounds the building on three sides. Large sandstone quoins define the second story corners of the building.

The prominent facade features a two-story projecting pavilion with paired colossal Ionic-type columns supporting a full entablature and dentilled pediment with molded detailing in the tympanum. Four galvanized metal globes accent the parapet on this south side and a statue of blindfolded Justice rests on the ridge of the gable-roofed pediment. Fourteen steps lead to the main double door entry surrounded by a two-story sandstone voussoir arch and a modern three-paned window and aluminum panel inserts above. The original double doors with sidelights and the one-story round arched window above were replaced with modern aluminum-framed windows and plate glass double doors in a remodel. The secondary entrance on the east side, accessed by thirteen steps, mimics the facade entry on a smaller scale with a sandstone voussoir arch highlighting a single door surrounded by sidelights and a large fanlight. The door and windows have also been replaced similar to the aluminum plate glass of the primary entrance.

The building is topped by an octagonal shaped cupola covered with a patterned metal roof. Originally, four round-arched double hung windows alternated with flat arched blind panels that may have once contained glass lights although an early photograph shows them as they are today. The round windows were later cover with wood panels.

On the three prominent sides of the building, round-arched windows are used on the first story with flat sandstone-arched windows on the second. The north side or back of the building has rectangular shaped windows with a simple arch of two rows of header brick and sandstone sills. All of these windows have been replaced with glass block or aluminum framed windows with small hopper sash inserts. The smaller flat arched basement windows have also been replaced or covered over with a wood panel.

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The cornerstone to the east of the front door reads:

Weston County Courthouse

A. D. 1910

J.E. Blakely	Laid by
John Nolan	A.F. & A.M. No. 13
Matt Hill	C.H. Parmalee
Com'rs	Dist. Judge
J.W. Howell cl'rk	C.A. Randall Arch't
D.W. Patton	William & Oaks
Trea's	B'ldrs

A three story war memorial wing was added to the west side of the building in 1953. The addition is recessed from the main block and is compatible with its use of sandstone for the first two floors and brick for the third floor. The entry is located at the basement level on the east side. A flat metal canopy is attached to the building above the windows and door; on its fascia reads the phrase "IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR HOME AND COUNTRY". Below the canopy are three large rectangular plaques, resembling window openings at a distance, that have the names of the Weston County war dead inscribed on them.

A free-standing memorial water fountain to honor native son and Wyoming Congressman Keith Thompson is located on the courthouse grounds. The sandstone memorial was constructed of stone salvaged from the demolition of the city's Wyoming National Guard building that was located across from the courthouse.

Over time alternations have occurred to the building both inside and out including the aforementioned door and window replacements. The interior received a major remodeling to the courtroom, judges chambers, and law library in the 1970s at a cost of \$85,000. In order to accommodate the handicapped, a small sandstone addition was constructed in 1990 at the basement level of the facade, which covered up an original window and included a new door that provided access to a modern elevator. The elevator replaced one half of the original double interior staircase. Stonemason Brent Sundstrom, a descendant of the family of Swedish stonemasons who constructed the courthouse, did the stone work for the addition which is very compatible with the original building.

In the year 2000, the Weston County courthouse remains as the most architecturally high style and imposing building in the small town of Newcastle. Now in its 90<sup>th</sup> year, the building still retains a high degree of integrity in design, location, setting, feeling, association, and materials. The workmanship of the local Swedish stonemasons is particularly notable. Designed by Wyoming architect Charles Randall, the building closely resembles the nearby Randall designed Butte County, South Dakota courthouse which was listed in the National Register in 1998.

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The Weston County Courthouse is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its role in, association with and representation of the broad patterns of development in Newcastle's early years as a county seat. As is typical in communities throughout the west, Newcastle experienced the usual success enjoyed by a town once it became the "county seat." The role of the courthouse in extending to the community of Newcastle a relative stability as the county seat in a somewhat economically marginal environment has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history. Weston County originated in 1890 and strong leadership in the Newcastle community, as personified by Mayor Frank W. Mondell and the Kilpatrick Brothers and Collins Company interests in the county, assured that Newcastle could be the only choice for the seat of county government.

The Weston County Courthouse sits at the head of Main, an anchor to the downtown district. The Weston County Courthouse has always been, since its construction in 1910 and 1911, well maintained. It retains strong integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association. Additionally, despite some interior and exterior modifications, original workmanship and materials are still very much in evidence on the building's exterior. The courthouse remains as the most beautiful and imposing structure in Weston County, nobly representing Weston County governments role in shaping this community, from 1890 to the present day.

On May 15, 1890, Weston County was formed out of what was then Crook County. Newcastle was the only incorporated town in the new county and had been designated as a railroad division headquarters for the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad. Newcastle was located on the main rail line, at the mouth of Cambria Canyon where a spur line ran seven miles up the canyon to the Kilpatrick Brothers & Collins' mines established in Cambria a year earlier. Cambria's coal was the only useable locomotive coal between Alliance, Nebraska and Sheridan, Wyoming, so Newcastle was a vital link in the railroad transportation network.

Oil had been discovered in what is now Weston County long before the rails were laid to Newcastle. In 1890 a well was drilled within the present city limits. However, mining remained the most important economic force for the new county well into the twentieth century. The first Weston County offices were located in the basement of Kilpatrick Brothers and Collins Mercantile in the town of Newcastle. By 1892 Newcastle's population had grown to more than a thousand. Businesses at the time included wholesale establishments for groceries, dry goods and clothing, hardware, hay and grain, liquors and cigars, and a lumber yard, a commission house, a meat market, and a brewery. Retail establishments



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included three hardware stores, three grocery stores, three dry goods stores, five clothing stores, three drug and medicine stores, two furniture stores, two milliners, three lumber stores, two news stands and one auction house. Professionals included six attorneys and two physicians as well as two shoemakers, one tailor and two taxidermists. There were also one bank, four livery stables, three newspapers, one restaurant, four hotels, four chop houses, fifteen saloons, four laundries, three blacksmith shops, one lodging house, two drays, three barbershops, one bathroom, one harness shop, two taxidermists, two warehouses, one carpenter shop, one hospital, one billiard hall, one jewelry store, one brick yard, seven sawmills, one roundhouse, and one brass band with instruments costing \$300.00. (News Letter Journal August 17, 1939).

By 1895 the basement rooms were no longer sufficient to house county government for the needs of growing county government, and in 1895 the offices were moved to larger quarters owned by Mr. M. B. Camplin. The Cambria mines provided good jobs for many immigrants coming into the county. A hundred and sixty acres of land was available under the Homestead Act, and in 1909 another land act, The Enlarged Homestead Act, allowed an additional 320 acres to be homesteaded. Immigrants from all over Europe and from the eastern U. S. were looking for opportunities in the "West." Many of the homesteaders came in "immigrant cars" provided by The Chicago Burlington & Quincy (and other railroads) at special rates.

About the turn of the century, the Ranch and Home Telephone Company was established to serve Weston and Crook Counties. April 25, 1903, then President Theodore Roosevelt arrived by train, accompanied by Wyoming Congressman Frank Mondell, himself a Weston County resident and republican leader of the time. Two thousand people applauded the President as he took the stand to speak and that event remains a highlight of Newcastle history. The community continued to grow and prosper and a new and important business was established in 1907 when Mr. A. C. Church established a large flour mill in Newcastle.

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In 1908 citizens of the prospering county petitioned the commissioners to build a county courthouse, and later that year a bond issue in the amount of \$25,000.00 was approved. The vote was 550 aye, 365 nay. Newcastle architect, Charles A. Randall, was hired to draw plans which would include the use of native stone for the exterior of the building. On June 6, 1909 the County of Weston purchased lot 18 in block 8 from Zelinda Waltone for \$300.00 and lots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, in block 8 from the Lincoln Land Company for \$700.00. August 4, 1909, a low bid of \$34,800 from M. J. Williams, contractor, of Crawford, Nebraska, was accepted. Newcastle's K. G. Spats' bid of \$2707.00 was accepted for the installation of plumbing and heating.

In September of 1909 construction began on the site, at the southeast corner of Block 8, Original Town of Newcastle. On February 10, 1910, a celebration was held with band music, speeches and refreshments, for the laying of the courthouse cornerstone. Completion was scheduled for September, but the contractor, M. J. Williams, was not providing the needed workers and materials to finish the job in a timely fashion. (Perhaps the travel from Crawford, Nebraska was more time-consuming than he had anticipated.) Minutes of Weston County Commissioners' proceedings dated August 3, 1910, state: "I, C. A. Randall superintending architect . . . hereby certify that . . . Mr. J. Williams is neglecting to supply a sufficiency of material and skilled workmen to prosecute the erection and building of said courthouse and the said Mr. J. Williams, the said contractor, is not prosecuting the said work of building and erecting the said courthouse with promptness, dispatch and diligence." On August 3, 1910, the County Commissioners passed a resolution firing Williams and taking possession of the project. The Commissioners then hired workers and provided materials for completion of the project. The Commissioners also hired C. A. Randall, the architect, as building superintendent.

Following the change of supervisors, John L. Sundstrom, Oscar Linden, Carl Sjostrum, and Robert Julian were hired and fortunately brought "old county" (Swedish) styles and stonemason craft to the project. One of these families (Sundstrom) moved from South Dakota to Newcastle in 1910. These Swedish immigrant families built stone structures throughout the area, and in Dubois, Wyoming. John L. Sundstrom arrived in Newcastle in 1910, having constructed buildings in the Black Hills (Custer and Hot Springs) since 1904. John Sundstrom his son Conrad, and certain of his nephews worked on many stone buildings in the region including, in Newcastle, the National Guard Armory, the National Guard Cavalry Barn (now the Anna Miller Museum), and many stone retaining walls. In Dubois, Wyoming, the Sundstroms built the Mockler Ranch home and the County Library. John's son Robert and Robert's son Brent have continued in the art of masonry and still live in Newcastle.

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Finally, in February of 1911, the county offices moved into their new headquarters. County offices included the County Clerk, the Treasurer, the Assessor and the Board of County Commissioners, on the main floor. The District Courtroom, Judge's Chambers, County Attorney, and Clerk of the District Court were on the second floor. (Judges who served the Sixth Judicial District and who resided in Newcastle were: Richard H. Scott, 1890-1893, William S. Metz, 1893-1897, Joseph L. Stotts, 1897-1911, Carroll H. Parmelee, 1911-1915, E. C. Raymond, 1915-1919, Harry P. Ilsley, 1919-1952, Preston T. McAvoy, 1952-1958, Rodney M. Guthrie 1958-1972, Paul T. Lamos Jr., 1972-1984. Judge Ilsley, who was highly regarded in his profession and by the citizens of the County, was appointed to the Wyoming Supreme Court in 1952 and died in office in 1953. Judge Rodney M. Guthrie was also appointed to the Wyoming Supreme Court in 1972 where he served for many years.)

On October 20, 1911, Weston County was honored by the visit of President William Howard Taft. During President Taft's tour of Wyoming, he made speeches at Cheyenne, Laramie, Rock Springs, and Newcastle where he spoke on the steps of the Weston County Courthouse. Both President Taft and Congressman Mondell, who was elected to the United States Congress in 1894 and still represented the state, were both powerful members of the Republican Party.

Predictions that Newcastle would become an oil metropolis proved prophetic by Weston County standards, when in March of 1920 a gusher was brought in near Osage, about 15 miles northwest of Newcastle. The courthouse became the center for oil lease activity, deeds, mortgages, royalty overrides, and countless other documents related to the oil boom. Oil promoters and entrepreneurs came to Weston County seeking their fortunes. As other gushers were drilled, the effect on Weston County's economy was dramatic. Small refineries sprung up around the county, in Osage, Newcastle, and other sites. Overnight Osage changed from a railroad depot to a bustling little city. Among those seeking opportunities in the oil boom was Grace McDonald (Phillips), the first woman to actually practice law in Wyoming, practiced her profession in Newcastle in the Weston County Courthouse, from 1920 to 1924, when she moved to Casper and finally to Roswell, New Mexico, where she died. She remained dedicated to her profession throughout her life.

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Also , in the 1920's The University of Wyoming Agriculture Extension Agent for Weston County occupied a small office on the first floor of the courthouse. After the Extension Agent's office moved to new quarters, the County Superintendent of Schools occupied this office for a time. Then, in succession, the Wyoming Probation and Parole Office, the Weston County Public Health Nurse, and finally the County Assessor used this office. The partition between this office and the office of County Commissioners was later removed. Today this is an attractive office and meeting room for the Weston County Commissioners.

Although coal mining at Cambria had played out by 1928 a new industry had developed near Upton. The mining and processin of bentonite, a volcanic clay useful in manufacturing and as drilling mud for oil production, began about 1927. In 1928 Americal Colloid Company constructed a processing plant three miles west of Upton. Soon Weston County was busy with the administration for Bentonite mining and processing for the four plants located within the county.

As with many small economically marginal western communities, the Depression of the 1930s brought dramatic change to Weston County. Workers lost jobs and property was auctioned on the courthouse steps for unpaid taxes. Beginning in 1933, the dustbowl, years brought even more hardship to local farmers and ranchers. The New Deal era of Franklin Roosevelt's administration marked the beginning of many social programs, including Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children and general relief, which were very important for many citizens of Weston County. The Weston County Welfare department was created to administer these programs and occupied space in the basement of the courthouse. In an interesting wedding of private practice and government utility another basement office was leased by the county to Kugland & Raynor, an insurance and land title agency.

The advent of World War II brought the entire country, including Weston County, out of the Great Depression. The country prepared for war. With the passage of the Selective Service Act on September 16, 1940, a Weston County Draft Board had to be established to handle the program locally. The labor pool in Weston County was dramatically decreased as young men went off to war and other residents moved away to work in defense industries. Those who remained at home worked diligently to fill in the gaps. Things began to return to normal with the endo of the war in 1945.

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In the 1940's and 1950's a cold, drab, unfinished basement room known as the "blue room." actually served to house women prisoners. The Weston County jail, located just across the alley from the Courthouse, was very small, with no cells for detention of female prisoners. When the District Judge handed down a sentence of jail time for a female offender, Sheriff Cummings had no choice but to turn her loose, as he had men prisoners in the county jail. She was admonished to return to court the next morning. When she failed to appear, the Judge let Sheriff Cummings know in no uncertain terms that this remedy was unacceptable. Cummings solved the problem by taking over a room in the courthouse basement, installing an iron door, a cot, some plumbing, and little else. The room, thereafter known as the "blue room", was used to house women prisoners and for juvenile detention as necessary for two decades.

One thing that did not return to normal was the oil industry. Oil discovered in the late 1940s led to the development of the Newcastle, Mush Creek, Skull Creek Fiddler Creek and the Clareon oil fields. A twelve mile pipeline was built by 8 Plains Pipeline Company for the Mush Creek Field to the refinery at Newcastle. Weston County experienced another oil boom. The courthouse became the center of a frenzy of activities when land men, promoters, oil men and their attorneys crowded the offices, the halls, and the vaults doing research and filing documents.

In the early 1950's the County Welfare Department moved to a new location. That basement office, as well as the "blue room" across the hall, are presently occupied by the Weston County Department of Public Health. In 1995, the Abstract and Title Company, successor to the Kugland & Raynor office, moved to a new location. That basement office is now a map room for the county assessor's office.

The county attorney's office remained in the courthouse, on the second floor, until 1957, when this county office moved to private office space. The county courtroom, the judge's chambers, the jury room, and the law library have had extensive remodeling over the years, but still occupy basically the same areas on the second floor, as does the office of the Clerk of the District Court. Offices on the main floor house the county offices as they did in 1911.

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Naturally, the main purpose and function of the courthouse has remained the same for the past 80 years, the interior has been renovated to meet changing needs of government. Original indoor features include some of the vaults, an original staircase, wood paneling in the lobby and original trim around doors, and the women's restroom on the main floor. There has been very little change in the original floor plan, with the exception of the elimination of one staircase, to accommodate an elevator for handicapped access. Regrettably, glass brick and metal frame doors and windows were added during some of the remodeling. The courtroom, judges chambers and law library on the upper floor have been completely refurbished with new materials.

The history of a community develops around the activities of ordinary citizens and the records of those activities. These records are archived in the county courthouse. Here the people can complain to the commissioners, buy a marriage license, bring their grievances to court, complain about their property taxes to the county assessor, complain about their vehicles taxes to the county treasurer, or simply pay their taxes to the proper county official in the proper office in their court house. Here, people from other countries can gain their U.S. Citizenship. In the courtroom they can bind their lives to others as in adoption proceedings or separate their lives from others as in divorces. The process of recording public information in the proper registers gives permanence to this information. Real estate records, family feuds, murder trials, probate records, oil boom stories - all are there in the courthouse. These records are available to anyone doing research for a business or any historical paper or someone just needing information. Citizens can also listen to a President of the United States or a Governor of Wyoming speak to them from the steps at the front of the courthouse. These business and cultural activities encourage citizens to develop a strong sense of place and community. Citizens of Weston County are justifiably proud to have the grandest example of architecture in the county as their county court house.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Nomination, National Register of Historic Places, Butte Form, *County Courthouse, Butte County, South Dakota, Belle Fourche*, June 1998 (Approved for Listing)

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Weston County Museum District, Anna Miller Museum, Original photos, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1940s, 1970s. Copies provided for nomination.

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Newspapers:

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