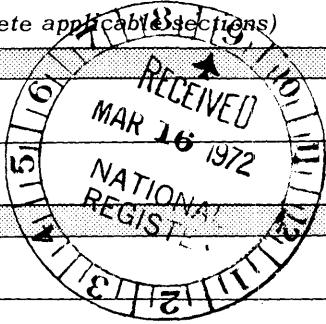


PH0087416

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Colorado	
COUNTY: Pitkin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
AUG 21 1972	



1. NAME

COMMON:
Wheeler Opera House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
The Wheeler Block

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
330 E. Hyman Ave.

CITY OR TOWN:
Aspen

STATE Colorado	CODE 08	COUNTY: Pitkin	CODE 097
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
City of Aspen

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box V

CITY OR TOWN:
Aspen

STATE:
Colorado

CODE:
08

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Pitkin County Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:
Pitkin County Court House

CITY OR TOWN:
Aspen

STATE:
Colorado

CODE:
08

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Town Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1959

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
City Engineer's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:
City Offices

CITY OR TOWN:
Aspen

STATE:
Colorado

CODE:
08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

AUG 21 1972

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wheeler Opera House is a three-story (with basement) sandstone and brick building constructed on a rectangular plan. The angle of the southeast corner is squared to form a minor entrance facade. The north and west, or rear facades, are constructed of brick, wholly without architectural ornament. The south and east, or front facades, are designed as an ornamental false front to be appreciated upon approach to the main entrance. The building comes closest to the Romanesque-Italianate architectural style.

The building has a hipped roof. The south facade of the building is crowned by a triangular pediment with an elaborately carved design. The southeast corner entrance is crowned by a half elliptical pediment. The south and east facades have a boxed cornice with decorated frieze.

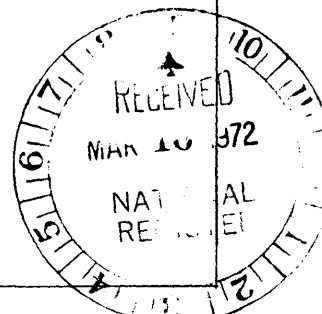
Trabeated and round-headed structural openings are combined on the south and east facades. First-story round arches are surrounded by sandstone voussoirs and sills, while third-story openings of the same shape are accented by use of a contrasting stone. An unbroken bank of trabeated windows, headed by granite lintels, opens from the second story.

Within the general scheme of structural opening shapes described above, exceptions are employed. The regularity of arched openings on the first story is broken on both the south and east facades by a three-sectioned trabeated opening, a full story in height. On the east facade, this opening is composed of single 2 sash and transom windows, flanking a central double entrance section. Wood transoms and mullions divide the space above the double entries. Sandstone columns mark the 3 main sections of the opening. On the south facade, the space divisions are indicated by decorative wood pillars. All three openings have been filled with wood facia.

Again on the third story, trabeated openings are combined with arched shapes. On the south facade, this deviation is part of a larger architectural feature. A grouping of three linteled windows is centered to match, in size and placement, a linteled grouping below. Above, three small round-headed windows repeat the pattern. Sandstone pilasters flank the trabeated openings. A second pair of flanking pilasters, in low relief, rises to the cornice. An elaborate carved pediment surmounts this facade unit.

The east facade is designed with greater regularity. Seven evenly-placed tall round-headed windows open from the third story. The pattern is broken by an eighth arched window at the northeast corner, scaled to approximately one-third the size of the other openings. The seven main windows are higher than their first-story counterparts and are divided by wood transoms and mullions into rectangular lights. Each is headed by a granite lunette. An odd, 3-sectioned, rectangular window opens from the extreme northeast corner, directly below the cornice. The seven double-hung, double windows (1/1) on the second floor alternate with stone separators and wood separators. The eighth window at the northeast corner of the building is a single, double hung (1/1) window.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

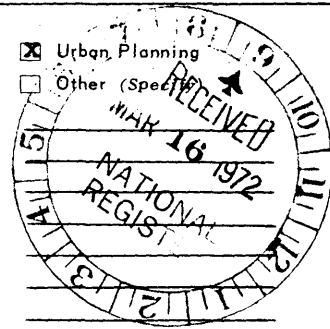
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Built 1888-89**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Construction of the Wheeler Block and Opera House began in June of 1888, a project financed by J. B. Wheeler, a New York investor who figured prominently in Colorado mining, banking and its general economic development. W. J. Edbrook, who designed the Tabor Grand Opera House in Denver, was the architect, and Peter Wilson was the contractor. The building was completed in 1889.

Originally, the ground floor contained the J. B. Wheeler Bank, a clothing store, a tobacco store, and a ticket office for the Opera House. The second floor contained professional offices and the Opera House occupied the entire third floor.

Opera House performances were booked through Peter McCourt's Silver Circuit theatrical agency and most of the well known performers to play in Denver and other western cities played here. For twenty years the Wheeler Opera House was recognized as the cultural center of this boom mining town. The large, modern building, its grand architecture, and its plush furnishings were a source of pride to the community, making it more than "just another mining town," and giving it a feeling of permanency.

In November of 1912 fire gutted the entire third floor opera house and that portion of the building was closed off and no longer used until 1947 when the city leased the upper two floors to the Aspen Company. This company reconstructed it back into a theatre, although not on the lavish scale originally employed.

Various professional offices are still housed on the second floor. The onetime bank quarters on the ground floor are now Chamber of Commerce offices and the Colorado Mountain College office. The other portion of the ground floor is now a thrift shop.

The building is publicly owned. Local individuals and groups are concurrently raising funds to restore the Opera House and the rest of the building for public use. The plan is to make the Opera House, once again, the cultural center of the community. But it means much more to the historically minded in this mining town turned-ski-and-cultural-center. Too much of the colorful heritage of Aspen is becoming hidden by the modern in this growing resort. The Opera House is perhaps one of the most outstanding examples of Aspen's proud and lusty past as a mining town. Its architecture, considered unique and colorful when the building was first constructed, remains a sturdy reminder of the permanence of bygone days.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Shaw, Bertha Louise. History of the Wheeler Opera House, 1889-1894.
 Western State College of Colo., unpublished Master's thesis, 1965.
 Wollé, Muriel Sibell. Stampede to Timberline. Denver, Sage Books, 1949.
 Wentworth, Frank L. Aspen on the Roaring Fork. Lakewood, Colo.
 Edited and published by Francis B. Rizzari, 1950.
 Bancroft, Caroline. Famous Aspen. Boulder, Johnson Publishing Co., 1951.

HP
 200
 11/17/72

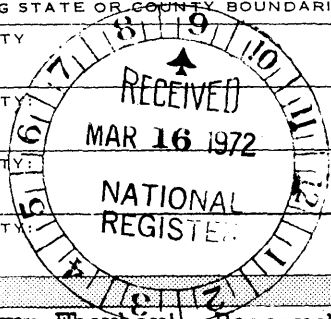
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N39° 11' 22"	W106° 49' 00"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9,000 sq. ft.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Regional Planner for Herb Bartel, Aspen/Pitkin County ; Perry Eberhart, Research Associate
State Historical Society of Colorado
 ORGANIZATION: Planning Office in conjunction with Aspen Historical Society ; Colo. State Museum DATE: 11/24/71
 STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box V ; 200 - 14th Ave.
 ; Denver,
 ; Colorado 80203
 CITY OR TOWN: Aspen, Colorado 81611 ; XXXX CODE: 08

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Stephen H. Hart

Title: Colorado State Liaison Officer

Date: March 2, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Wiley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 8/21/72

ATTEST: William Huntley
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Colorado	
COUNTY Pitkin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER AUG 21 1972	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Wheeler Opera House

AND/OR HISTORIC: same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 330 E. Hyman Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Aspen

CITY OR TOWN: Aspen

STATE: Colorado

CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
08	Pitkin	097

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE: City of Aspen

SCALE: 1" = 100' and 1" = 1000'

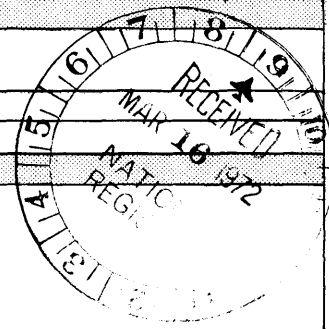
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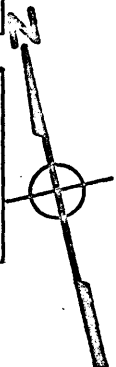
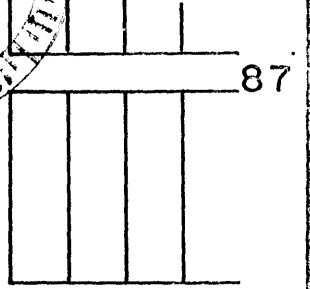
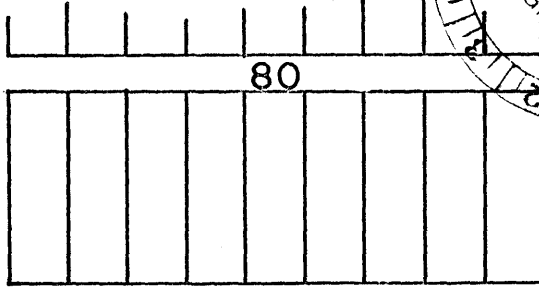
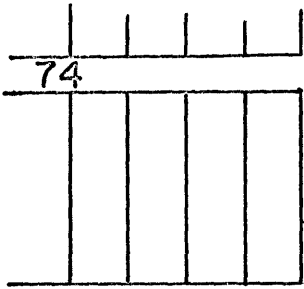
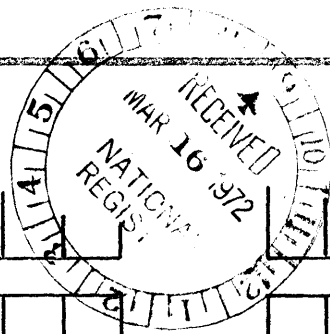
4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

Handwritten signature

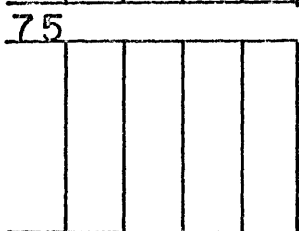
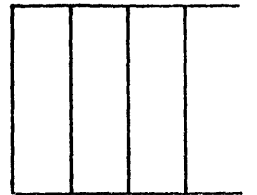
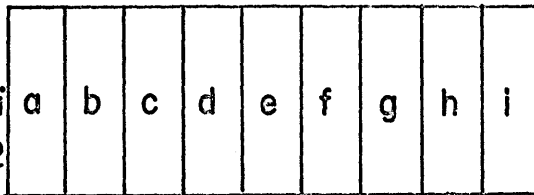
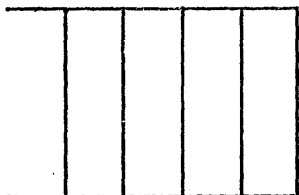




HOPKINS

AVE.

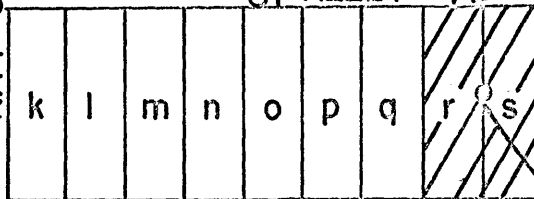
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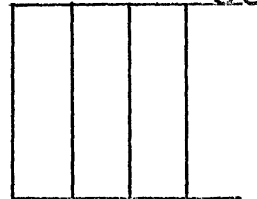
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81 ALLEY

20'



60'

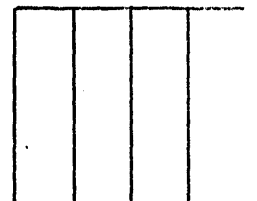
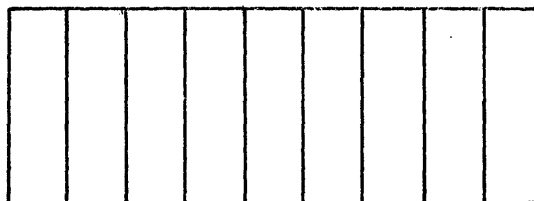
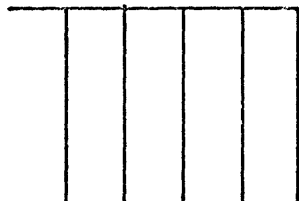


HYMAN

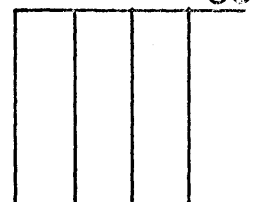
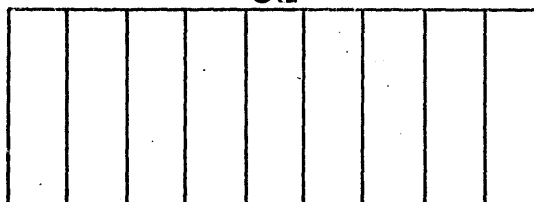
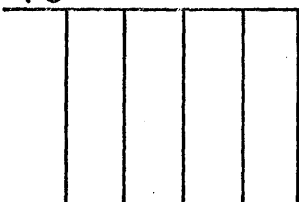
AVE.

N39° 11' 22"

W.106° 49' 00"



ST.



MILL

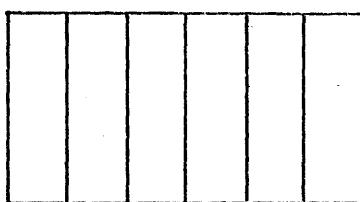
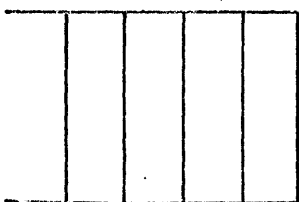
COOPER

AVE.

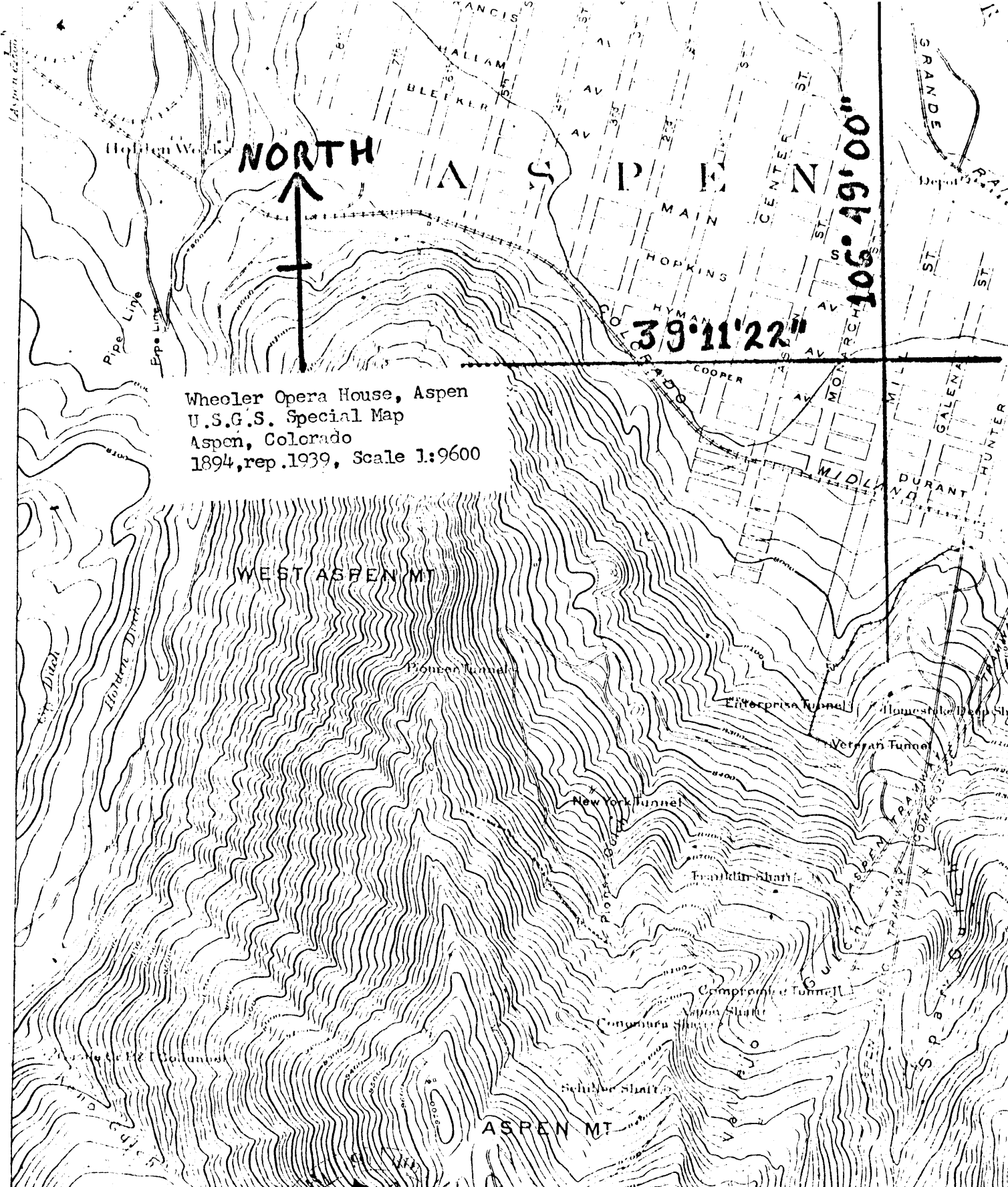
CITY OF ASPEN

WHEELER OPERA HOUSE

MONARCH



DRN-dbw DATE: 10-27-71 SCALE: 1"=100' FILE NO. 900-40



Wheeler Opera House, Aspen
 U.S.G.S. Special Map
 Aspen, Colorado
 1894, rep. 1939, Scale 1:9600

WEST ASPEN MT

ASPEN MT

Aspen 1:9600
 A.H. Thompson, Geographer
 Morris Bien, topographer in charge
 Interpretation by Morris Bien
 Topography by F.E. Covey
 Published in 1939.



Scale 1:9600 or 1000

Contour Interval