

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 5 1984
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic DOWNTOWN THERMOPOLIS HISTORIC DISTRICT

and/or common

2. Location

Broadway, 5th, and 6th Sts.

street & number SEE ITEM 10 not for publication

city, town Thermopolis vicinity of

state Wyoming code 56 county Hot Springs code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners

street & number See Addendum

city, town vicinity of state Wyoming

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hot Springs County Clerk

street & number County Courthouse

city, town Thermopolis state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N / A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Thermopolis is located along the Northern Burlington railroad line, at the mouth of Wind River Canyon in the northwest corner of Wyoming, approximately 120 miles southeast of Yellowstone Park. Buildings in Downtown Thermopolis proposed historic district are located in a compact area on the main street, Broadway, and on Fifth Street, which runs perpendicular to Broadway and forms the eastern boundary of the District.

Broadway Street itself provides the setting for these buildings in much the same way today as it did in yesteryear. Built double-wide to accommodate teams of up to 16 mules or horses transporting freight, today, the same four-lane street is befitting for automobile traffic and ample parking. Not many small towns can boast of such spacious streets being a part of its original townsite.

The buildings in the proposed district are all commercial, and have both architectural and historical significance. They were constructed between 1898 and 1923 and portray a Victorian, transitional turn-of-the-century commercial architecture. Some buildings, such as the Messenger Building and the Jewel Box building, reflect a very elaborate Victorian style, while others such as Our Own Hardware and Friedl's, represent the skills of a local bricklayer by their similar decorative bricked patterns on the second floors. Still others, such as the Smith Building and the Sanford and Bjorklund Buildings, exemplify the work of one of the local stonemasons active at the turn of the century. Thus, the entire district is a representation of the different skills and materials available throughout the town's history. These basic, original elements characteristic of the type, period and method of construction work together with the facades that have been added throughout the last 60 years to visually describe an architectural history of Thermopolis. Upon examining the character of the buildings as they appear today, one can ascertain Thermopolis' prosperous past and various attempts to keep up with the times.

Prominent buildings within Downtown Thermopolis' proposed historic district include the Smith Building, Sanford Building, Bjorklund Building, Manhattan Cafe, Ben Franklin's, Friedl's, the Messenger Building, Klink Building, Wyoming Trust Building, Mode-O-Day, Jewel Box, Our Own Hardware Country Charm, REA Variety, J.C. Penney's, and Fair Deal Furniture. (See attached listing of buildings and description of their architectural and historical significance.)

SEE ADDENDUM

NOTE: The numbers after Item 7 on the photograph labels refer to the numbers on Item 7 Addendum.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1898–1923

Builder/Architect Smith, Goodwin, McCory

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The downtown Thermopolis district provides an ongoing example of the influences and growth patterns of one of Wyoming's unique communities. Thermopolis is associated with nearly all of the major events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of Wyoming history. These include the acquisition of Indian land for the townsite; the recreational and tourist benefits provided by the mineral springs; numerous mining activities in the area and the railroad's involvement in these ventures; water development and related agricultural activities; and the influx of state and federal governmental interests. The downtown is associated with locally significant persons and embodies the distinctive characteristics of transitional turn-of-the-century small town commercial structures as they represent the community's growth over a period of time and reflect a chronological variety of popular alterations which have been pursued during the 20th century. Though many storefronts have experienced limited alterations, the downtown style closely resembles its appearance of 70 years ago, another fact which makes it unique. The structures are architecturally similar with a large number of native sandstone construction and many with elaborate decorative brickwork, and deserves enrollment on the National Register of Historic Places.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ADDENDUM

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property approximately 4 acres

Quadrangle name Thermopolis, WY

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 7	7 2 5 0 1 9 1 5	4 8 3 1 6 2 1 1 0	B	1 7	7 2 5 0 1 9 1 5	4 8 3 1 6 1 1 4 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 7	7 2 5 0 6 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 1 4 1 0	D	1 7	7 2 5 0 6 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 0 8 1 0
E	1 7	7 2 4 9 6 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 0 8 1 0	F	1 7	7 2 4 9 6 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 1 4 1 0
G	1 7	7 2 4 9 2 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 1 4 1 0	H	1 7	7 2 4 9 2 1 0	4 8 3 1 6 2 1 1 0

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE ADDENDUM

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA
state	NA	code	NA	county	NA	code	NA

11. Form Prepared By

name/title T.L. Crush, Project Director; George Dearborn, County Planner

organization Thermopolis Downtown Revitalization Committee;
Hot Springs County Planning date 8/23/83

street & number 434 Broadway; 4th and Arapahoe telephone (307) 864-2177; (307) 864-2732

city or town Thermopolis state WY 82443

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Alvin J. Bastron

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3/29/84

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

5/10/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Thermopolis Main Street Historic District consists of 18 downtown commercial buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The majority of the buildings are substantially unaltered. The district is adjacent to Hot Springs State Park, the first state park to be established in Wyoming. Due to this proximity, the district retains its character as a major early health center as well as the character of an early western town.

1. 116 North 5th Street - (Messenger Building) - CONTRIBUTING
The first floor of this building was constructed in 1902, the second in 1906, making it one of the oldest buildings in the district. It is a two story commercial building with regularly coursed rock-faced native sandstone on the front facade and irregularly coursed stone sides and back. There is a stone cornice set off by a dentil frieze and short parapet with stone caps on the corners on the front facade. The second story windows are double hung one over one with stone radiating flat arches and oversized keystones. The dentil frieze and cornice pattern is repeated below the second story windows and serve as sills for the second story windows. First floor windows have arched surrounds with an additional sun ray relief setting off the door arch. The door is set on the angle of the front facade. The front windows feature an elaborate frieze dividing the upper one-third of the windows which have leaded glass in a peacock or fan design. Leaded glass in the first floor windows has been painted white.
2. 105-113 North 5th Street & 444 Broadway (Corner Drug, Montgomery Ward's, Delores Decorating and Granny's Diner) - CONTRIBUTING
This building was constructed in 1923 for the Wyoming Trust Company and also served as county courthouse from 1937-39. It is a one-story stone and brick building with evidence of a planned second story entrance which was never completed. The stone parapet is inscribed in relief. There is a terra cotta brick cornice supported by stone pilasters and a floral and dentil frieze.
3. 500 - 506 Broadway & 110 - 112 North 5th Street - The Klink Building (Town Hall, Sewing Circle, Owl Bar and Mac's Bar) - CONTRIBUTING
This is a two-story terra cotta brick building constructed in 1917. It features a stylized parapet stepped terra cotta cornice supported by a dentil frieze and set off by regularly spaced portal vents with colored brick surrounds and trim. The second story windows are double hung one over one with colored trim surrounds and are joined to the portal vents by belt and string coursing of colored brick. The windows are regularly spaced and the sills are also represented by colored brick coursing. The first floor transoms and store fronts have been covered with modern materials such as permastone and ridged aluminum.

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4. **503 Broadway - Connors Building (Mode-O-Day) - CONTRIBUTING**
The first floor of this building was constructed in 1898 with a second story added in 1906 making it the oldest building in the district. It was constructed as the Higgins & McGrath store, the first mercantile and post office in Thermopolis. Both stories are constructed of regularly coursed native sandstone and remain substantially unaltered except for the first floor storefront which has been changed by the addition of modern signage and glass. The narrow second story windows have stone sills and lintels. The glass has been removed to serve a patio area for a second story apartment. There is a high parapet set off by a stone cornice supported by a simple ladder frieze.
5. **505 Broadway - Ives Building (The Jewel Box) - CONTRIBUTING**
This Victorian commercial building was constructed in 1901 by John McCoy. The upstairs was originally used as an opera house and the first floor was the bank and town hall. It is the most elaborate and second oldest in the district. It is two-story, wood frame structure with a mail order pressed tin facade featuring an elaborate cornice set off by finials, paired brackets and a variety of frieze designs, repeated between the cornice and second story windows. The second story windows are set off by rounded pilasters with elaborate base and capitals. The first floor has been changed by the addition of a rock and glass storefront which was placed over the original transom and first floor facade which remains intact beneath.
6. **509 Broadway (Our Own Hardware) - CONTRIBUTING**
Constructed in 1917, this was the first of several in the district constructed by Charles Smith, a local bricklayer. The first floor was the post office from 1917-1925 and the second floor served as county courtroom in 1937-39. This area was also used for community dances in the 1920's and 1930's. It is a two-story structure with a variety of decorative brickwork. There is a flat diamond brick pattern of colored brick which appears to be "woven" into the parapet and set apart by a brick "frame." Lintels above the second story windows are set off by stone diamonds and squares. There is also a stone frieze with brick patterns between the parapet windows. The first floor has a modern sign and windows.
7. **513 Broadway (Country Charm) - NON-CONTRIBUTING**
This structure was built in 1906. While the original facade is intact, it has been covered by steel facade, rendering it non-contributing at this time, but a possible candidate for future tax act certification and rehabilitation.
8. **513 Broadway (REA Variety) - CONTRIBUTING**
Built in 1907, this is a two-story building of native sandstone, with a simple stone parapet and stone cornice supported by a ladder frieze. Stone radiating flat arch lintels with oversized keystones set off the second-story windows. A stone string course serves as sills for second story windows. The building is unaltered, except for tile covering and a modern sign on the first floor storefront.

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9. 521 Broadway (J.C. Penney's) CONTRIBUTING
This is another of Charlie Smith's buildings. It is a two-story brick with a variety of colored brick patterns. Stepped brick on the parapet and patterned light/dark brick set off the second story windows. Quoining appears on the corners and around the second story windows, which are set in. There is a string course below the parapet and below the second story windows. The second story is unaltered, while tile has been added to the first floor, along with changes to the windows.
10. 527 Broadway (Fair Deal Furniture) CONTRIBUTING
Built in 1917 to serve as a hardware store, this two-story, two-toned brick building features a slight cornice of light brick and a similar color used in a raised fashion, so that the rest of the building appears set in. A belt course of darker brick is apparent beneath the slight cornice. Again, tile has been added to the first floor storefront. This building, along with the REA Variety and the J.C. Penney's Buildings portray Thermopolis' attempt to keep up with the times by using tile to cover their original storefronts.
11. 536-548 Broadway (Gizmo's Glenmar, Herring's Taxidermy, Visually Handicapped) Smith Building CONTRIBUTING
Built in 1906 by architects Goodwin and Goodwin and Dr. J.R. Richards, the structure is two story, native stone and features Gothic treatments. There is a stone ladder frieze below the stone cornice and repeated between the first and second stories which also serves as a window sill for second-story windows. Paried arched windows with radiating arch surrounds set off second-story windows. Original facades are primarily intact with covered transoms and modern signs.
12. 530 Broadway (Big Horn Agency, Inc.) Sanford Building CONTRIBUTING
Build in 1906 for Mrs. Tina Mammen, it is a continuation of the structure built for Dr. Richards. In the newspaper accounts, it is apparent that the idea was originally to rebuild the entire block in this fashion.
13. 528 Broadway (Business with Pleasure) Bjorklund Building CONTRIBUTING
Originally built in 1906 for Jacob Price who operated a meat market with his partner, Mr. Brown. This building is a further continuation of the Gothic castle stonebuilding style initiated by Dr. Richards (see above Item #9 for description). The only noticeable change in the building from the other two is the shape of the second-story windows. These windows are rectangular and lack the keystone lentils found above the windows in the other two structures.
14. 526 Broadway (Manhattan Cafe) CONTRIBUTING
Built in 1908 for C.L. Simmons, the building was originally used as a fruit stand, ice cream parlor. The business of the Manhattan Cafe is quite old in itself, with mention of it in newspaper accounts as early as 1907. Originally, the newspaper accounts report that Simmons planned to build a one-story structure. So it is impossible to determine whether or not the

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second story was built at the same time as the first, or if it was built later. The present building is a two-story brick structure. A dental frieze tops the parapet and string course of arched brick divides the first and second stories. Arched brick lentils appear above the second story windows, and below, the sills are stepped brick. Raised brick, diamond-shaped decorations set off the second story windows. A tile facade sets off the original storefront to further demonstrate the effect of trend changes on downtown Thermopolis.

15. 524 Broadway (Ben Franklin) - CONTRIBUTING
Constructed in 1919, this is yet another of Charlie Smith's works. It is a one-story brick with decorative brick patterns. The corbelled parapet is set off by a cornice and colored dental frieze and also features a set-in brick pattern divided by simple brick pilasters with diamond-shaped patterns of green brick in the middle of each section. The original storefront has a modern sign covering the transom.
16. 518 Broadway (Friedl's) - CONTRIBUTING
Constructed in 1917, this two-story brick and stone building features an elaborate pedimented parapet and terra cotta cornice supported by short columns. Decorated brickwork of light and dark brick frame the second story windows which are set in stone. Below the windows is a string course set off by a dental frieze serving as a window sill for second story windows. The original storefront is intact, complete with cloth awning and original display windows.
17. 512 Broadway (Pumpernick's) - NON-CONTRIBUTING
Constructed in 1905 by Joe Chaon as a bowling alley, this one-story structure has been altered by a brick storefront and shake shingle mansard.

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Thermopolis, located on the boundary of Hot Springs State Park, was a planned community which began shortly after its site was sold to the U.S. Government by the Shoshoni and Arapahoe Indian Tribes, who had previously owned the property as part of their reservation. The old town, Andersonville, was located at the mouth of Owl Creek. After the Treaty of 1896 was ratified by Congress, this town picked up and moved to the present site, which had been platted and surveyed, provision being made for the growth of a large city.¹ The town was organized under townsite laws, and the title was issued to corporate authorities, in trust.² The present day town reflects the insight of its forefathers, both in its layout of streets and sidewalks, and in its proximity to the Big Horn Springs, the largest producing hot mineral springs in the world.³ (a claim often disputed by various parties)

The proposed district is a living record of the roots and many changes experienced by the town throughout this century. It is a compact area of fifteen Victorian, turn-of-the-century commercial structures, only two of which are noncontributing. Though many of the storefronts have experienced limited alterations, you can still see the town much as it looked 70 years ago. The buildings all project a basic similarity in architectural style, and their alterations are key examples of various architectural fads of this century. Most noteworthy are the large number of buildings of native sandstone built between 1906-1908, and the decorative brickwork on many of the buildings constructed between 1916-1919 by Charlie Smith, a local bricklayer.

Many elements have affected the growth of the town's business district over the last eighty years. Probably the biggest element that has affected the growth of the Town is the existence of the Big Horn Hot Springs or Bah-gue-wana (smoking waters), as the Shoshoni tribe called it. Without the proximity to the Big Horn Springs, it is doubtful the town would have ever existed, much less survived. The springs, and the state park provided a purpose for the town to exist, and the town continues today to provide services to visitors of the springs. Thus, the history of the state park has had a profound effect on the evolution of the town. The area has always been a recreational and healing center because of the mineral pools and the powers that some feel they possess. The number of recreations and/or healing facilities, such as hotels, hospitals, and sanitariums, has varied at different times over the last eighty years. The history and existence of these facilities have affected the town in many ways. These facilities, which utilized the spring waters, attracted the famous and infamous of the West and across the nation to Thermopolis to bathe. Examples include Teddy Roosevelt and Butch Cassidy.⁴

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Another ingredient in the evolution of the town and the proposed district is the numerous mineral discoveries nearby. In fact, the construction periods of the district are directly related to the dates of specific mineral discoveries. Copper, oil, coal, sulphur, and magnesium are among the minerals found in this vicinity that directly affected the growth of the business district. With the construction of the Boysen Dam and Reservoir, and the completion of the Burlington Northern railroad line, Thermopolis was permanently on the map.

Until the fall of 1897, the site of the town was part of the Wind River Indian Reservation. In that year, through the efforts of Congressman Frank W. Mondell, a tract of 10 square miles was purchased by the government from the Shoshoni and Arapahoe Indians and opened for settlement. Originally the town of Thermopolis was located at the mouth of Owl Creek, just outside the reservation. It was known as Andersonville. As soon as the tract was opened for settlement, the town picked up and moved to the present site. The site, which started at the southwest corner of the square mile set aside for the reserve, was surveyed by a Mr. Seymore. At that time, a homesteader could file on two business lots or six business lots, and at the same time, take up another homestead. The town fathers originally planned the streets double-wide as they exist today. This design was chosen to accommodate a 16-mule team and make it possible for the team to turn around. Before the railroad line, freight teams such as these were the only way to transport goods into the town. A 1933 edition of the Thermopolis Journal credits Daniel Bayne as being the first to build a house in the town's present site, inspired by the fact that most visitors to the springs would pitch their tents there rather than stay in the town of Andersonville.⁵ Thus, the spring water is directly responsible for the establishment of the town.

From the beginning of settlement by white men in this area, and even previous to that, by the Indians, the water from the "Big Springs" was claimed to be a cure-all for any kind of disease or physical disorder. A 1910 Chamber of Commerce publication claimed that "any person wishing to better his worldly condition, or searching for health and recreation, should not fail to visit Thermopolis. Nowhere on earth are climatic conditions more favorable for the cure of consumption than here."⁶ As late as 1926, Adrian Reynolds, then Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce made the claim that the waters from the Hot Springs was a cure-all in an article published in the Wyoming Labor Journal now on file in the Western History Research Center at the University of Wyoming.⁷

The claims continued. In 1950, the Northern Wyoming Daily News reported, "The blue-green water, used in treatment of rheumatism and infantile paralysis, bubbles and boils from an unknown depth at the foot of Monument Hill and flows into large enclosed pools. Dr. Thomas Magee, post surgeon at Camp Brown, used and tested the water in 1875. Dr. Julius Schuelke, posted at Fort Washakie, took a sample to Paris and had it analyzed by Professor M.P. Schuetzenberger of the College de France, who was unable to distinguish it from Carlsbad waters."⁸

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This same Dr. Schuelke apparently took quite an interest in the town because of his feelings about the healing power of the water. Not only was he one of the early promoters of the waters, and recommending its use to his patients, but he is also responsible for the naming of the new town. According to W.I. Slane, and a subsequent article published in the Independent Record in 1947, the town was named by Dr. Schuelke and in a letter to Mrs. Jessie L. Duhig, under date of July 21, 1947, he gives the names of those present when the name was chosen. When the postmaster resigned at the Old Town (Torrey, two miles above the mouth of Owl Creek), a petition was circulated to have the post office moved to the town-site at the mouth of Owl Creek (Andersonville). The Post Office Department granted the change in location and Ed Enderly was appointed postmaster. They wanted a new name for their new town. Dr. Schuelke and Ben Hanson, owners of the townsite, called a meeting of the citizens to decide on a name. Schuelke suggested the name, Thermopolis, explaining that it was formed from the first five letters of "thermal" and the last letters of "metropolis" and really meant "hot water city," in Greek. Joe Magill seconded the suggestion.⁹

Thermopolis grew rapidly. The 1900 census credited 299 men, women and children living in the town. In 1910, the Chamber of Commerce reported 1500. In 1917, the Laramie Republican estimated 30,000 tourists had visited Thermopolis the year before.¹⁰

All conditions appeared favorable for the growth of a large city. An article printed in 1927 in the Wyoming Labor Journal describes the climate that existed. "Thermopolis is more widely diversified than any town in the state. It not only has the world's most famous hot springs and many recreational features, but it is also surrounded by some of the largest livestock ranches in the west. It acts as a trading center for several of the prominent oil fields in the state . . . Large coal deposits are being mined within a short radius . . . Farming is being engaged on an extensive scale, while large deposits of sulphur and minerals are to be found but undeveloped."¹¹

These mineral finds played a big part in the amount and quality of the commercial activities in the business district. There were basically two building booms. In 1905-1908 a lot of sandstone structures were erected and between 1914-1917, many brick buildings were constructed. These two building periods directly correlate with specific mineral activity.

In 1906, reservation lands were opened for mineral development.¹² This brought prospective developers into Thermopolis, since it was picked as the place to register claims for the land. In September of that year, magnesium deposits were found outside of the town.¹³ Copper was also discovered nearby in 1906. Thermopolis was dubbed "Copper Mountain" after mining engineers ran tests from core samples and were convinced that the area would be the copper capital of the world.¹⁴ In 1911, the Burlington Northern opened its new railroad station in town.¹⁵ In 1913, the first oil drilling rigs were moved in and oil shipments began to go out.¹⁶

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In 1916, yet another mineral was discovered, sulphate of potassium.¹⁷ From all the minerals in the ground, the area flourishes as an agricultural center. There were several vegetable truck farms and turkey farms, mention of a silver fox farm, and a fruit farm adjoining the state reserve.¹⁸ In 1925, a natural fertilizer business was started four miles from town. The Sulphergerm Corporation manufactured a fertilizer from the sulphur beds.¹⁹ About the same time a water bottling plant was established which bottled the mineral water and distributed it to other areas.²⁰ In 1923, "Thermopolis Clay" began distribution to New York and other cities. Manufactured by local residents, this substance, made from argillaceous earth, was advertised to clean the face, remove pimples, wrinkles, and tired lines.²¹

With this abundance of mineral activity, it is no wonder the town quickly took root. Of course, the original businesses were moved from Andersonville. Literally, some of the buildings were moved log by log.²² Higgins and McGrath bought out the general merchandise businesses of E.C. Enderly at the old town in 1895.²³ When the town of Thermopolis was established, the firm built the first stone building, which is the oldest structure in the proposed district.²⁴ Herald's Pharmacy moved after the Treaty was signed.²⁵ It is also part of the proposed district. All of the other structures of the original businesses from the old town have been destroyed. New buildings housing new businesses were erected beginning in 1905. Before that, most structures were tents or temporary frame structures. Thus, the completion of stronger, brick and stone structures gave the town a more permanent identity.

In this first downtown building boom, native sandstone buildings such as the Smith Building, the Sanford Building, the present-day Country Charm and REA Variety, and the Bjorklund Building were erected. Later, after the discovery of oil, another large building boom occurred in the downtown district. The massive Klink Building, along with other brick structures such as J.C. Penney's, Fair Deal Furniture and Our Own Hardware were constructed, many of which were contracted by a local bricklayer, Charlie Smith. This man's mark upon the town is apparent throughout the proposed district by the decorative brickwork accomplished on the second stories and/or parapets of his buildings. Thus, there is still much of the original architecture intact and unaltered. The alterations that have occurred are not drastic enough to take away the flavor and feel for this town's roots. It doesn't take much imagination to look down Broadway and see this proposed historic district as it may have looked in the 1920's. The alterations themselves give a clue to the amount of commerce experienced by the town after the 1920's. No new buildings have been constructed in the downtown area since the 20's. Many of the buildings, such as REA Variety, J.C. Penney's, Fair Deal Furniture and the Manhattan Cafe, were altered in the 1940's with tile storefronts. Big square blocks of tile adorn the storefronts of these buildings today. It is interesting to note that four out of fifteen significant structures were altered at the same time in the same architectural style. Thus, it can be assumed that commerce was still healthy at that time, but not booming as in the earlier periods.

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This point raises the question of what happened between the mid-20's until the late 30's or early 40's that the business district nor the town expanded any further than the boundaries reached by the mid-20's. All of the building activity of the teen's would have caused anyone to assume that Thermopolis was destined to be a large city, or at least twice as big as its present population of 4200. As you look at the town today, you see it is a financially solid community, but it has grown so little from the town it was 60 years ago. Why did a town which started out with such an explosion of growth, evolve instead into a small community, relatively unchanged from its early days of glory?

One possible theory relates to the park, its recreational facilities, and their effect on the town and its growth. Even before the town was established, crude hot tubs had been constructed at the park site for bathing purposes.²⁶ It has already been mentioned that Dr. Schuelke was an early promoter of the waters' healing powers. Other pioneer doctors made the same claims and referred their patients to Thermopolis and the springs. The first sanitarium was opened in 1902 by Gregg and Weddle. In 1906, Drs. J.R. and Charles Richards financed and built a sanitarium/hotel in the park because they felt the area was destined to be a big health resort.²⁷ By 1908, facilities in the park included the sanitarium, a bath house, and the Star Plunge (referred to as the Washakie Hotel).²⁸ In 1917, the Carter Sanitarium opened in the park.²⁹

The Washakie Hotel was sold to Walter Swanson in 1918. He planned to build a new facility, complete with a casino, the edifice alone to cost \$1 million.³⁰ Of course, this facility was never completed, except for a small wing, but construction of recreational/medical facilities continued. In 1918, Dr. Hamilton built the Hopewell Hospital overlooking the springs.³¹ At one time in the late 20's, there were three hospitals, the Pierce Rocky Mountain Clinic, the Hopewell and the Carter Hotel, but by 1932, there was only one. What happened between the late 20's and early 1930's could have had such an effect on the town that it has never fully recovered. Of course, the Depression played a major role in this event. Dr. Hamilton's death seems to have triggered the closing of this facility.³² Finally, in 1964, the State Board of Charities and Reform, the state body which governs the park, ordered all inadequate structures to be demolished.³³ Thus, all the landmarks were destroyed, for many had not been in operation for some time. As to why these facilities were let to deteriorate in the first place, was not found in research that can be documented. However, the impact of their lack of existence can be seen in the fact that the town hasn't experienced a boom since they flourished.

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Footnotes

¹"Thermopolis, Mecca of the Afflicted," Thermopolis Independent Record, August 15, 1903.

²Thermopolis Independent Record, June 23, 1906.

³Dorothy Milek, The Gift of Bahgüewana, unpublished, p. 130.

⁴Ibid., pp. 21 and 133.

⁵Casper Star Tribune, March 27, 1977.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Wyoming Labor Journal, v. XXXI, no. 13, sec. 7, Cheyenne, WY, Friday, September 3, 1926, pp. 1 and 2.

⁸Northern Wyoming Daily News, Worland, WY, August 24, 1950.

⁹Thermopolis Independent Record, August 21, 1947, p. 36.

¹⁰Casper Star Tribune, March 27, 1977.

¹¹Wyoming Labor Journal, v. XXXIII, no. 15, sec. 7, Cheyenne, WY, Friday, September 2, 1927, p. 1.

¹²Thermopolis Independent Record, August 18, 1906.

¹³Ibid., September 22, 1906.

¹⁴Ibid., January 7, 1906.

¹⁵Ibid., August 10, 1911.

¹⁶Ibid., March 5, 1913.

¹⁷Ibid., April 13, 1916.

¹⁸Ibid., September 2, 1905.

¹⁹Ibid., September 3, 1925.

²⁰Dorothy Milek, The Gift of Bahgüewana, unpublished, p. 130.

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Footnotes (continued)

21 Thermopolis Independent Record, January 25, 1923.

22 "Mecca of the Afflicted," Thermopolis Independent Record, August 15, 1903.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 "Mecca of the Afflicted," Thermopolis Independent Record, August 15, 1903.

26 Dorothy Milek, The Gift of Bahgüewana, unpublished, p. 21.

27 Thermopolis Independent Record, November 17, 1906.

28 Ibid., May 2, 1908.

29 Ibid., March 22, 1917.

30 Helen May, "The Old Player' Yields Way to the New, Modern Era and Progress," Casper Star Tribune, Saturday, May 31, 1969, p. 7A.

31 Thermopolis Independent Record, March 22, 1918.

32 Dorothy Milek, The Gift of Bahgüewana, unpublished, p. 118.

33 Ibid., p. 170.

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Thermopolis Independent Record. Existing issues from 1901 to January 7, 1905.

Ibid. February 18, 1905.

Ibid. March 25, 1905.

Ibid. May 20, 1905.

Ibid. May 27, 1905.

Ibid. February 16, 1906.

Ibid. March 17, 1906.

Ibid. April 7, 1906.

Ibid. April 28, 1906.

Ibid. June 23, 1906.

Ibid. August 18, 1906.

Ibid. September 8, 1906.

Ibid. September 15, 1906.

Ibid. September 22, 1906.

Ibid. September 29, 1906.

Ibid. October 20, 1906.

Ibid. November 17, 1906.

Ibid. January 4, 1907.

Ibid. February 17, 1906.

Ibid. February 23, 1907.

Ibid. March 9, 1907.

Ibid. March 16, 1907.

Ibid. May 25, 1907.

Ibid. June 22, 1907.

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- Ibid. October 12, 1907.
- Ibid. October 26, 1907.
- Ibid. February 15, 1908.
- Ibid. March 14, 1908.
- Ibid. May 2, 1908.
- Ibid. May 16, 1908.
- Ibid. May 28, 1909.
- Ibid. July 9, 1909.
- Ibid. February 9, 1911.
- Ibid. April 6, 1911.
- Ibid. August 10, 1911.
- Ibid. September 15, 1911.
- Ibid. January 10, 1913.
- Ibid. March 5, 1913.
- Ibid. January 22, 1913.
- Ibid. April 13, 1916.
- Ibid. August 4, 1916.
- Ibid. March 22, 1917.
- Ibid. May 17, 1917.
- Ibid. November 17, 1922.
- Ibid. January 25, 1923.
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- Ibid. August 14, 1924, v. XXIV.

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Wyoming Labor Journal. v. XXXI, no. 13, sec. 7, Cheyenne, WY, Friday, September 3, 1926, pp. 1 and 2.

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Claire Axtell, Pioneer Home, Thermopolis, WY, August 17, 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. Sonny Dodge, Thermopolis, WY, August 18, 1983.

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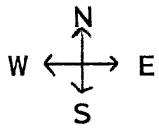
The downtown Thermopolis Historic District boundary begins at the northeast corner of Broadway and 6th Street (Point G) and extends in a straight line north along the sidewalk to the alley. It then continues east along the south side of the alley to the east wall of Pumpernicks and proceeds north behind the Messenger building to an arbitrary point coinciding with the north wall of said building. Then the boundary extends directly east along the north wall of the Messenger Building to the west side of 5th Street and follows the sidewalk edge in front of the said building south to the south side of the alley. It then extends east across 5th Street following the south side of the alley to an arbitrary point coinciding with the eastern most wall of the Wyoming Trust building. Then it proceeds straight south along the east wall of the Wyoming Trust Building to the sidewalk on the north side of Broadway (Point B). The boundary continues west in a straight line along the sidewalk across 5th Street to the south side of the sidewalk at the northwest corner of 5th and Broadway (Point C). It then proceeds south in a straight line across Broadway and follows the sidewalk on the west side of 5th Street to the north side of the alley (Point D). The boundary then continues straight west along the north side of the alley to an arbitrary point coinciding with the west wall of Fair Deal Furniture (Point E). It then extends straight north along the west wall of Fair Deal Furniture across Broadway to the sidewalk edge on the north side of Broadway (Point F). The boundary then proceeds straight west along the sidewalk to the northeast corner of 6th and Broadway or the point of beginning.

The UTM reference points provided encompass the entire area being nominated but reflect a slightly larger area along the northern boundary than described within the nomination because of the small scale of the U.S.G.S. map. It will be necessary to consult the enclosed site plan for a more precise accounting of that northern boundary as described between Points H & A.

JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries for the downtown Thermopolis Historic District encompass Thermopolis' highest concentration of downtown commercial buildings retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling and association. They compliment each other in terms of scale, size, placement, and type and method of construction. The boundary primarily follows sidewalks and alleys and the exterior walls of buildings only when it is necessary to exclude modern intrusions, buildings rendered noncontributing by alterations, or to include solid contributors located along the edges of the district. The boundary defines a contiguous district with a minimum of intrusions.

For legal clarification the boundaries described herein include those structures described within the nomination and located on Lots 13 and 14 Block 1, the south 30 feet of Lots 1 through 3 and Lots 13 through 24 Block 2, and Lots 1 through 8 Block 7 Original Town of Thermopolis.



BROADWAY

Downtown Thermopolis Historic District

Points A - H represent approximate locations of UTM reference points.

Not to Scale

