

MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

BRIDGER SURVEY

Legal Description: E1/2 NW1/4 SW1/4 Sec. 22,
T. 6 S., Range 23 East

Address: East of Bridger

Ownership: Name: Nola Jones

Address: Bridger, MT 59104
(Box S)



Roll# 8/Frame# 22

Historic Name: Henry Gebo Residence

Common Name: Nola Jones Residence

Date of Construction: 1909

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Henry Gebo

Original Owner: Henry Gebo

Original Use: Homestead Residence

Present Use: Residence

Research Sources:

Abstract of Title: Carbon County Courthouse

Plat Records: Carbon County Courthouse

Tax Records: Carbon County Courthouse

Building Permits: N/A

Sewer/Water Permits: N/A

City Directories: 1905-22

Sanborn Maps: No Exposure

Newspapers: Red Lodge Picket; 4-1-1893;

4-29-1893; 3-30-00; 9-5-02; New

Idea; 8-1-1895; Free Press;

9-26-02; 11-27-03; Carbon County

Gazette; 1-19-06; Bridger Advocate;

2-21-07; Bridger Banner; 11-28-07;

Bridger Times; 4-23-09; 7-2-09;

9-24-09; 9-30-10; 12-1-11; 6-6-13;

10-25-18; 12-6-18; 1-21-26; 6-29-33;

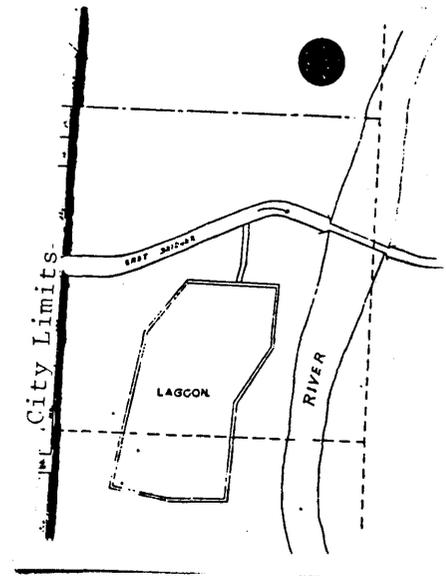
6-16-38; 8-4-38; 3-30-44

Other: 1928 Voter's Register; 1900, 1910 Census;

Oral Interview with Goldie Gebo Thompson

Grant, October 1986; Nola Jones, October

1986



Location Map

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The Gebo House, set on a small rise above the Clark Fork River, is the largest residence in Bridger. This two story wood frame dwelling is in deteriorated condition but maintains a high degree of architectural integrity. The house is long and rectangular in

shape and has two gabled roof projections on the (south) front facade. A large porch on the west end of the front facade has been removed. This porch apparently sported a balcony above, which was accessed by the second story doorway set in the gable end.

The building is covered with unpainted clapboard siding. The roof is covered with wood shingles and is pierced by three corbelled brick interior chimneys. The soffits are enclosed and the roof eaves are finished with fascia boards and return gable ends.

The windows of the Gebo House are one-over-one double hung sash. A small square bay with a band of one-over-one double hung windows projects from the center of the south facade. The doors are wooden panel, single light. A small side entry is appended to the east wall and appears to be original to the house.

Local legend has it that the original one-room log, homestead cabin purchased by Gebo in 1909 exists within this frame house, but owner objection to visitors prevented verification.

Stumps of large cottonwood trees are found throughout the yard in the immediate vicinity of the house. The remains of a number of out buildings exist to the (north) rear of the house, including a wood frame, gambrel roofed barn.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

Henry and Ella Gebo moved from Streaton, Illinois to Red Lodge in 1891. There, with W.H. Close, he got into the house moving business, moving houses from the "old town" or Bridge Street area to the north, where lots had been platted and sold to individual owners. They moved to Bridger in 1896, the year W.A. Clark open the Bridger Coal Mine.

Ranching was Gebo's main enterprise, and he bought out someone who had settled near the Clarks Fork River, and he filed and patented a homestead there. A cabin was on the property, and the Gebo family moved in. In 1909 he built this house around the log cabin, which is inside the center wing that protrudes from the basic rectangular block. The Times wrote that "contractors" were putting the finishing touches on the Henry Gebo dwelling. It has eleven rooms. The Polk Directory lists Gebo as a "farmer" and a "carpenter", and he is known to have helped in the construction of the Glidden Mercantile.

In addition to ranching and carpentering, Henry had a saloon with Fred Jacobs in 1902, and sawmill in the Pryor Mountains in 1909. In 1913 Ella Gebo bottled water from their spring, and sold it at her son-in-law's store, C.E. Thompson Confectionery, etc.

Henry and Ella had five daughters and four sons. The oldest

girl, Lillian, married a carpenter named Archibald McLean. The parents gave them a piece of property, and McLean built a house there. Goldie recalls that it was the prettiest bungalow in town. McLean also built other houses in Bridger, Laurel, and Billings, and may have helped on this house.

Ted Lynn purchased the Gebo farm in 1926, and he cut down the many cottonwood trees the Gebos had planted. The paper said he planned to make improvements, but the only noticeable change is that the large porch and balcony have been removed from the left side of the house. It is not known whether Lynn removed it.

Property transactions are not available at the County Courthouse on this property, nor is a tax record on this house to be found. But in 1933 the banker, W.A. Jones foreclosed on a mortgage of Harry and Margaret Pierce, Robert Rue & Company, Alice Pageman and the American National Bank. The Jones family has since had possession of the house, and Mrs. Nola Jones lives there today.

The Gebo homestead was the site of a C.C.C. camp built in Bridger in 1938. There were 40 members of Company 575 of 5th Corps C.C.C. stationed there, and they erected the camp buildings. The recruits were from Kentucky, and their assignments were to implement the plans drawn under the Taylor Grazing Act. In 1944 Kenneth Colbern and his family lived in the camp, and he was employed by the Grazing Service (two years before the establishment of the Bureau of Land Management). Today a sewage lagoon covers this site, as well as the location of the Gebo family cemetery. Graves were moved to Red Lodge.

INTEGRITY:

Although the front porch of this house has been removed and the exterior beveled siding has not seen a coat of paint in many years, the Gebo House possesses a high degree of historic architectural integrity of design, materials, workmanship, setting, location, association, and feeling.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Gebo House meets criterion C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Henry Gebo was one of Bridger's earliest residents and his eleven-room homestead house is representative of Gebo's prosperity, which was not wholly dependent upon his earnings from his land. The Gebo House is a distinctive example of simplified, late Queen Anne styling, with its irregular massing and combination roof structure. It is the largest house in the vicinity and stands at the edge of the city limits of Bridger as a reminder of the early agricultural settlement of the Clarks Fork Valley.

BOUNDARY:

Located at the end of a long driveway, but clearly visible from the Bridger townsite, the Gebo House stands alone on a bluff above the Clarks Fork River. The southeastern corner of the nominated property is located at the west abutment of the bridge across the Clarks Fork River. From that point the boundary runs 300' to the west along the right-of-way of the county, which serves as the southern boundary; then, 640' north-northeast; then approximately 300' east to the bank of the Clarks Fork River; then, along the river bank to the point of beginning.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Acreage: approximately 4 acres
USGS Quad: Bridger, Mont. 1956, 7.5
UTM References: 12/644720/5018028

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Carbon County Historic Preservation Office
Address: Box 1651
Red Lodge, MT 59068
Date: October, 1986

