

# Money talks, history walks

Residents establishing Preservation Board so JH won't be like any other Western town



The Wort Hotel is one site that could be on the National Historic Register listing.

By Peter B. Brace

**J**ackson Drug Store.  
Sweetwater Restaurant.  
The Lucas and Walton ranches.  
Many people don't realize the significance of these properties to Teton County and Wyoming's history and to its cultural identity.

Yet many important historical sites in Jackson Hole are either decaying or being remodeled into something new—usually for money.

The predominant attitude in the West is that property owners do as they please with what they own, said Larry Kummer, Director of the Teton County Historical Center said.

"The West in general, isn't very old," he said. "This isn't like back East where you've got things that are still standing at 200 to 300 years old."

"A lot of it has to do with what you can and can't do with your property. And I think the attitudes toward historical preservation and land use are more conservative out here."

**"A lot of it has to do with what you can and can't do with your property. And I think the attitudes toward historical preservation and land use are more conservative out here."**

**Larry Kummer  
Director of the TCHC**

And it's that attitude that prompted several Jackson Hole residents to help establish the county's Historic Preservation Board to save what can be saved.

"This is not an attempt to regulate and tell people what they can do with their property," said Carole Hofley, a member of the Teton County Commission-created task force that wrote the bylaws for the new board. "It's more to encourage and assist people with the preservation of their property."



BONNIE JO MOUNT - GUIDE

The Little Jewel building stands vacant in a lot at the corner of Gregory Lane and High School Road.

The idea sprang from the minds of historians Bob Righter and Sheri Smith, two warm-weather residents from Texas who wanted to help the National Park Service preserve historic sites like the Mormon Row Barns.

The pair presented their proposal at a county commission meeting last summer. The commission liked the idea and helped Hofley and others initiate a task force.

The county is in the process of creating an official program called the Certified Local Government Program Commissioner Sandy Shuptrine said.

"We agreed that it was a better way to enable preservation of a site or structure in our community," she said.

The Certified Local Government is essentially a local preservation commission, said Nancy Weidel, historian and local preservation coordinator for the State Historic Preservation Office.

There are 18 such local preservation boards in Wyoming working on a wide range of preservation efforts, Weidel said.

"Some of them are very, very effective," she said. "There's been a whole variety of projects like interpretive signs along the road and Evanston has sponsored an archeological study of its Chinatown."

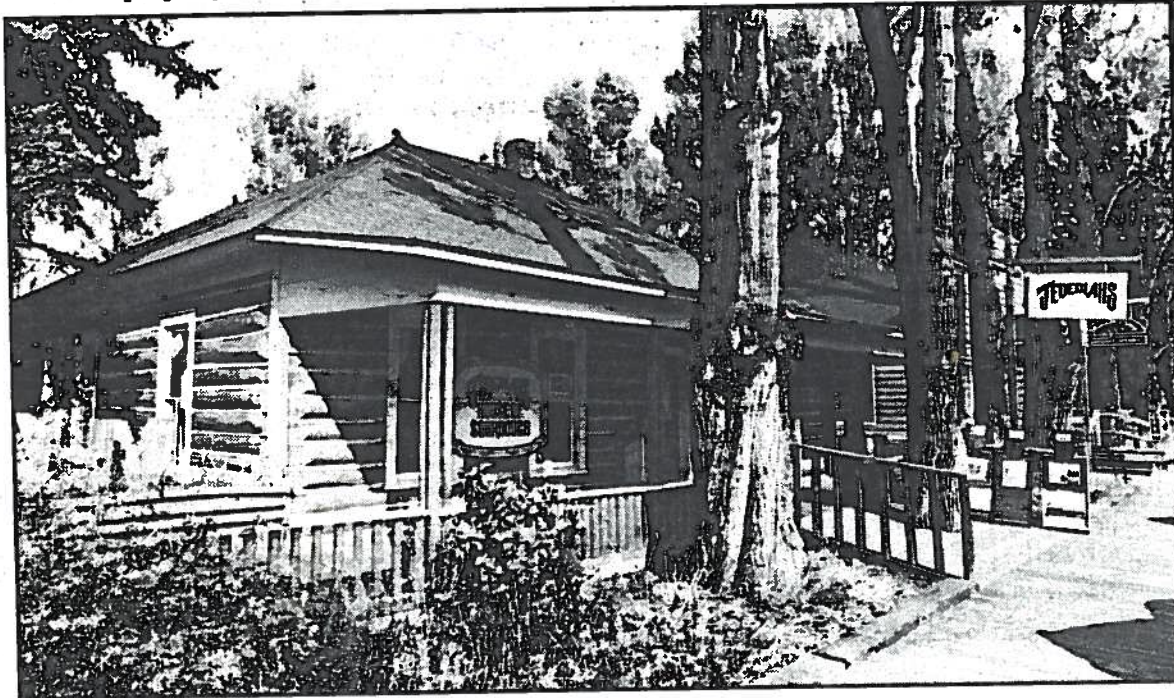
Weidel said there will be a conference coming up soon in Casper that will focus on empty buildings in downtown areas.

"It all depends on the groups," Weidel said. "They've all got different focuses."

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board won't begin until a survey of the county is complete in about three years.

The county commission unanimously adopted resolution Tuesday establishing the board pending County Attorney Paul Vaughn's review of the board proposed bylaws. The commission will vote on the bylaws and appoint the nine-member board at its next meeting on April 30.

The board will consist mostly of residents with  
see PRESERVATION. A



Jedediah's Original House of Sourdough is only one of the few places in Jackson that is listed on the National Historic Register.

# PRESERVATION: *History walks*

continued from A6

historical preservation, architectural and building experience with one or two citizen-at-large members.

County Commissioner Ann Stephenson stressed the importance of the board and the line of communication it will open between the park and the county.

"I can see a real value in this group and this means of communicating to the park and I can also see that the means of diplomacy and a total cooperation is necessary," Stephenson said.

Mike Johnson, Grand Teton National Park cultural resources specialist, is hoping that Righter's and Smith's efforts will translate into a long-lasting, local/federal partnership to preserve sites of lesser national value, but of great regional importance.

"These are not nationally significant structures and so in terms of getting federal money for maintenance, it's not possible," Johnson said. "It's pretty low on the totem pole."

Currently, the park has about 125 properties listed on the National Historic Register, but in Jackson Hole, only a handful of properties are listed including Jedediah's Original House of Sourdough and St. John's Episcopal Church.

"There's a lot of sites that the community would like to see preserved and primarily, the one the community has contacted me about is the barns at Mormon Row," Johnson said. "If we're going to see those sites preserved, we're going

to have to see a cooperative effort."

Kummer, retiring director of the Historical Center, said the creation of historical preservation board is just what Teton County needs to retain its individuality and uniqueness among other Western towns being transformed by developers and people with little regard for the history of a place.

Some buildings, like the Little Jewel and the Jackson Hole Courier, have been removed from their original sites and left to deteriorate on vacant lots.

Still others like the Gap and J. Crew building, the Sweetwater Restaurant, Dirty Jacks and the Wax Museum have already had several other uses in them or soon will have, all in the name of money, Kummer said.

"Many buildings have been modified so much I don't know how much historical significance they would have," he said.

"Part of it is Jackson Hole is looked upon as place to invest your money to tap into the tourist industry and people who come here to do that are not interested in preserving historic character, they're interested in investing their money."

Hofley agrees with Kummer that a lot of buildings have been torn down and replaced, or reused and not preserved, but she has high hopes for the Historic Preservation Board.

"A lot of people have been concerned about preservation in the park (and Jackson Hole)," she said. "I think there will be a good partnership, but it won't save every building."

**"A lot of people have been concerned about preservation in the park (and Jackson Hole). I think there will be a good partnership, but it won't save every building."**

*Carole Hofley*

16B - JACKSON HOLE NEWS, Wednesday, June 5, 1996

LEGAL

11. Consideration of Certified Local Government for Historic Preservation Bylaws and Board Appointments. Paul Vaughn gave an up-date on

the required documents.

Bob made a motion, seconded by Sandy, to direct the Chair to sign a clean copy of the Resolution when presented. Motion carried.

There was a discussion on Board appointments. Joan Grever was present to discuss this with the Board.

Sandy moved, seconded by Ann, to approve the following ten people:

- Robert W. Righter  
700 Mississippi Ave.  
El Paso, TX 79902  
915-545-1306 (home)  
915-747-7064 (work)
- Joan Grever  
200 St. Andrews Blvd., Unit 308  
Winter Park, FL 32792

- 700 Ponderosa Dr.  
Jackson, WY 83001  
307-733-3080 (home)

- James R. Schoen  
Box 1888  
Jackson, WY 83001

- 208-787-2315 (home)  
307-739-5523 (work)

- Kurt Dubbe  
Box 20269  
Jackson, WY 83001

- 307-739-2447 (home)  
307-739-2275 (work)

- Georgia Ligori  
Box 3950  
Jackson, WY 83001

- 307-733-5051 (home)  
307-733-5929 (work)

- Carole Hofley  
Box 767  
Wilson, WY 83014

- 307-733-7727 (home)

- Silver L. Jacobson  
Box 272  
Teton Village, WY 83025

- 307-739-1721 (home)  
307-733-1770 (work)

- Robert Rudd  
Box 400  
Wilson, WY 83014

- 307-733-3385 (home)

- Robin L.A. Hartnett  
Box 3780  
Jackson, WY 83001

- 307-733-5902 (home)

- 307-733-5233 (work)

- Lorna Miller  
Box 261  
Wilson, WY 83014

- 307-733-7574 (home)

Motion carried.  
The meeting was recessed and an Executive Session was taken at 11:30 A.M.

May 15, 1996

## Lytjen is new director of the historical society

■ Director was working at NMWA previously.

By Mark Huffman

The Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum went just up the road to find its new executive director, finding the person at the National Museum of Wildlife Art.

Lokey Lytjen has been working at NMWA as its director of public programs, overseeing adult and children's education activities and coordinating with other groups in related fields for programs of use to both.

"It's a wonderful organization," Lytjen said of the historical society and museum. "I'm pleased to be chosen to be part of it."

Lytjen replaces Larry Kummer, who is retiring. Lytjen will work half days at her new job next week and begins full-time after that.

Lytjen described herself as having "a history fetish" that was fueled by her childhood in Savannah, Ga. She studied history in college, concentrating on Elizabethan and Tudor

periods; while teaching at Greensboro College in North Carolina, she also worked at a Moravian historical site near Winston-Salem. Lytjen later worked at the Elizabeth II State Historic Site in North Carolina. The museum there was dedicated to the early English settlement of the area by colonists led by Sir Walter Raleigh.

Before coming to Jackson in 1993, Lytjen was assistant director of the Art Gallery at the University of New Hampshire.

Lytjen serves as a member of the Wyoming Council for the Humanities. She also is associated with the Partners, a Jackson Hole Cultural Council program that promotes cooperation between Jackson Hole schools and cultural organizations.

Lytjen will be on hand to meet the public during an open house set to mark the reopening of the Jackson Hole Museum for the summer.

The museum, at the corner of Glenwood and Deloney, will reopen Friday, May 24. The museum will be open that day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

# A conundrum at Mormon Row

■ Historic preservation may clash with park values on eve of 100th celebration.

By Alyson Smith

Preservationists may be working for nought on an original homestead site at Mormon Row.

The century-old home built by one of Kelly's first homesteaders is being restored; but Grand Teton National Park owns the land, and park policy may require destruction of the site and a return to its "natural state."

As descendants of Mormon Row pioneers plan a 100th anniversary celebration for July 11 to 14, some wonder whether history will be preserved.

"My hope is that we can stabilize and restore as many homes left on Mormon Row as possible," said Judy Crandall Sloane, the granddaughter of Ida and Andy Chambers, original homesteaders to the three-mile-long road known as Mormon Row, northwest of Kelly. "I think they can be used as historical sites."

Sloane and 15 to 20 family and friends are volunteering for the non-profit organization, Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Teton Area, to restore her grandparents' house.

"We are very hopeful that Grand Teton National Park will make public, very quickly, their long-term plans," she said. "It will become harder to raise money and resources if there is a possibility of the houses being destroyed, moved off, or used for storage."

There has been limited communication between the two parties, and each one has different goals.

"I think we're going to look at very limited historical preservation," said Mike Johnson, cultural resource specialist for the park. "This area can have multiple uses — it will be a good place to keep trail stock in the summer."



Cari Hanson of Santa Fe, N.M., removes some collected junk from one of the Chambers' outbuildings.

When the park acquires land, it usually tries to return it to its natural state, he said. This could entail removal of the degenerating structures.

Descendants of original Mormon Row homesteaders don't want to see their heritage destroyed.

"The Chambers home is an ideal ranch museum," Sloane said. "It is an accurate record of how ranching was done in the mid-1900s, and people could get an idea of how ranching has changed throughout the years. The critical value is the education people can get from this."

The park has not agreed to any type of commitment to preservation, and this has the restoration workers wondering if all of their time and expense will pay off.

"The time is coming when we have to know what's going to happen," Sloane said.

"Later this summer, we're going to start a Mormon Row site planning process to decide how much we're



Earl Crandall, son-in-law to the original homesteaders, pitches in with the rest of the Habitat for Humanity crew as they work to restore the historic Mormon Row home.

going to keep and how much will be removed," said Johnson. The park still hasn't committed to a date.

"Of course we're going to keep the barn everyone takes photographs of," he said. The barn was built by T.A. Moulton, one of the first to homestead. The barn sits directly in front of the Tetons.

Despite the difference in goals, the two groups share no hard feelings. In fact, Johnson was out with the Habitat workers helping them clean up and haul away debris.

Since the Chambers home is the oldest intact house, a first generation farmstead house, there is also a possibility of preserving it, Johnson said.

Sloane said historic structures can't be recreated once they're gone.

"It is very important that the public understands that once you have destroyed a historic object or historic environment, it never comes back," she said. "This should ring a bell

with the people from Jackson; once something is destroyed, it ends up being reinvented history with a public media image."

Some of the volunteers for Habitat for Humanity were at Mormon Row to preserve history even if they weren't attached by heritage.

"I'm just out here to have fun," said Mills Stovall, a volunteer from Santa Fe.

"I'm just out here to restore history," said Scott Graves, a volunteer.

The Chambers' home being restored was built in about 1916 as an effort to "prove up the land" for permanent settlement and ownership under the Homestead Act.

The community that settled along Mormon Row was relatively small and mostly, but not entirely, composed of Mormon families. The oldest part of the Calico Pizza building was originally the Mormon church there.

As years passed, people moved off of Mormon Row, and several moved into neighboring towns.



Helping with restoration efforts on the back porch, Howard Sloane pries at a rotten door jamb.

Bonnie and Orin Budge, whose parents were original Mormon Row homesteaders, are married and live in Jackson. Today they are working with other Mormon Row descendants to plan the centennial anniversary of the first Mormon Row homesteader, who homesteaded in 1896.

The celebration will take place at Mormon Row. From July 11 to 14, family members, friends and interested people will show up for dancing, food, memories, and a chance to learn about some of Jackson Hole's historic past.

**"Once something is destroyed, it ends up being reinvented history with a public media image."**

— Judy Crandall Sloane  
MORMON ROW DESCENDANT

NEWS PHOTOS / GARTH DOWLING

## Saving Mormon Row

This letter is in response to the *Jackson Hole News* article titled, "A Conundrum at Mormon Row."

The project discussed in the article, the stabilization and restoration of some of the buildings on the Andy Chambers homestead on Mormon Row, began a year ago in June 1995. It was initiated by a cooperative effort between Grand Teton National Park and several interested private parties willing to donate funds and volunteer their time and travel.

Melody Webb, then assistant superintendent of the park, approved a \$4,000 matching grant which was combined with the \$4,000 of private funds raised. Mike Johnson, a specialist in historic preservation for the park, was actively involved in planning and coordinating the effort. Judy Crandall Sloane and Ed Brown volunteered their time to sign up and supervise volunteers as well as work on the project.

Many people have contributed and, as a result, a great deal of work has been done. And throughout the project, the park and individuals have communicated and collaborated. This has been a positive working relationship from the beginning. On April 26, Jack Neckels, park superintendent, stated in a letter to me, "... the stabilization of this house is appropriate and should be completed."

The most critical tasks have been completed, as has the budget. We are now at a point of evaluating what additional work will be done on the project, if any. Obviously, this must include developing a plan that takes into account the park's long-term goals in historic preservation.

Also, while the Jackson Hole chapter of Habitat for Humanity played a very active role in soliciting volunteers for the project and in obtaining donated meals, it is important to note that this is not a Habitat-sponsored project. Typically, Habitat for Humanity-sponsored projects involve building or rehabilitating buildings used in affordable housing projects.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the *News* for its continued interest in this project and would particularly like to thank the *News* and staff member Alison Gregor for running ads to obtain so many excellent volunteers from the community. Without their help, the project could not have been completed as quickly or well as it was.

Judith Crandall Sloane  
Jackson Hole

# TETON STYLE

Wednesday, July 17, 1996



Veda Moulton pumps out organ music before the start of Sunday services at the Mormon Row centennial celebration.

## Coming home

### 700 attend Mormon Row centennial anniversary

By Alyson Smith

Seven hundred family members and friends found their way back to Mormon Row last week to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the first homesteaders in that area.

It was James Ira May, a farmer from Rockland, Idaho, who homesteaded a three-mile stretch at the southeast end of Blacktail Butte 100 years ago. Nestled in the hayfields between the jagged Tetons and the Gros Ventre Range, the dirt road and subsequent homesteads become known as Mormon Row.

Last week's four-day reunion of the May family was teeming with "relatives and friends, and relatives and friends, and relatives and friends," said Clark A. Moulton, the last to live on the row.

"I've been bumping into them over at the tent, and they all want hugs," he said. "Now, I'm just plain out of hugs."

The celebration was largely coordinated by Mormon Row descendants Bonnie Budge and Marsha Holden. They spent nearly a year tracking down family members, planning



Many attended the re-enactment of an early L.D.S. church service held in a tent Sunday at Mormon Row.

the festivities and negotiating with Grand Teton National Park.

Hearing the old timers' stories, watching people chat and laugh while eating from the large potluck Saturday afternoon, and sitting serenely during the reenactment of an L.D.S. church service Sunday was more than a reward for the hard work. "It's a once in a lifetime event," said Holden.

Everyone wore name tags, but there was a theme: Budge, May, Allen, Harthorn, Riniker, Perry, Chamber, Moulton, and Murphy were the monikers that dominated the reunion.

The tranquility of Mormon Row is nearly undisturbed; the babble of Ditch Creek, the wind in the trees, and the whispers of history speaking from the degenerating old barns, homes, and rusting horse-drawn plows gives family members more than just a taste of their roots.

"I just love to hear the old stories about how it was back then," said James Moulton, 18, of Provo. "It brings a lump to my throat when I look at the old houses. I just wish they

*"It's a once in a lifetime event."*

— Marsha Holden

Continued on page 6B

# Coming home

Continued from cover  
weren't locked up so I could look in them."

There were plenty of kids playing near the 50-yard-long tent interrupting the landscape with its bold red and white stripes. They skipped rocks in Ditch Creek — no doubt doing exactly what their grandparents and great-grandparents did many years before them.

Boyd Moulton, a son of an original homesteader who now lives in Provo, fondly remembers the freedom he felt in his days of youth.

"It was just like when the Indians were here, no laws, no regulations — you could do practically anything you wanted, except be dishonest," he said with a mischievous laugh and glint in his eye. "We could do just about anything. Sometimes it wasn't too good for us."

Lester May, an old timer and former Jackson mayor whose parents were original homesteaders, also recalled his youth.

"Eight or nine of us kids, we lived the good life," he said. "We had plenty to eat and wear."

Perhaps the freedom from regulations relieved residents from the reality of living in a harsh climate without modern conveniences like electric heat, light, and running water. Clark Moulton recalled those conditions.

"I remember living in a one-room shack in the winter. There was a wall made of canvas dividing it, and in the winter we'd break ice off of it to get water," he said. "Every time you went somewhere, you took a warm rock in the sleigh with you to keep you warm."

In the winter, the few times people got out of their houses was for church on Sunday.

"There wasn't much to do," said Boyd Moulton. "We'd make a freezer full of ice cream, and we'd have to put it on the stove so we could thaw it out and eat it."

Not all who grew up on Mormon Row had it so tough.

Ten-year-old Sara Moulton spent the first five years of her life living there with her three brothers. Her calm disposition and relaxed demeanor reflects a youth nearly isolated from many of the distractions of today's city youngsters.

"I played in the tree forts and swung in the barn," Sara said, "I miss it." Her family was able to live in her great-grandparent's house as long as a member of that family's generation was still living. They had to move out in '91, when Sara's great-grandmother died.

The land surrounding Mormon Row was acquired by Grand Teton National Park many decades ago under the agreement that those who lived on the land at the time could stay, but once they died the land would be turned over to the park.

"As far as I know, the Mormon Row people have been good

neighbors to the park," said Tim Bywater, a park spokesman.

Many, but not all, of the homesteaders on Mormon Row were Mormon, and those who weren't really lived the place up. On display in the red and white striped tent was Allen Budge's Prohibition-era still, circa 1927.

"Rumor has it that there's still some moonshine buried over by the homestead, which was near Moose; near the tipis by the river," said Mary Pulliam, a descendent of Budge, who bootlegged the liquor. "I guess you could call it aged," she said.

"They used to go to the dance hall in the upstairs of the post office on the east side of the Square. All the men would hide their moonshine in their post office boxes," she said.

*"It's a legacy, it's just a part of me. That's who I am and I don't want to let it die."*

— Laurie Moulton

In a lighthearted defense of her grandfather's sales, Pulliam gives the difficulty of making a living as an excuse for the illegal and un-Mormon behavior. "Well, he had five children to support," she said. "He had to sell bootleg liquor."

At the reunion, family and friends approached each other with the comfort of knowing that they were related, if not by family, then by a strong history. Some came to meet extended family members for the first time and to visit a place that they hold dear. For others of a younger generation, it took attending the reunion celebration to get the full effect of their history.

"You kind of take it for granted," said Webb Moulton, a second-generation descendant who lives in Moscow, Idaho. "I've never known anywhere else [than Idaho, but] both my parents grew up here. It takes occasions like this to really appreciate my history."

The celebration will leave a lasting impression on everyone who attended; and it is the hope of many that the history will be preserved, or at least not forgotten when the old timers pass away.

"It's a legacy; it's just a part of me. That's who I am, and I don't want to let it die," said Laurie Moulton, a Nebraska resident. She wants the family stories of Mormon Row to live for another 100 years.

"That's why I bring my children here," she said.



Sharlene Budge helps with the auction, which helped pay expenses of the reunion.



Classmates of the Grovont School gather around teacher Rachel Sutton in 1931.



Sara Moulton is one of the last to have spent her early childhood on Mormon Row.

NEWS PHOTO / JIM EVANS

PHOTO COURTESY OF BONNIE BUDGE

NEWS PHOTO / JIM EVANS

MORMON ROW CENTENNIAL



NEWS PHOTO / JIM EVANS

Three generations of the May family scan a scrapbook during the Mormon Row centennial celebration over the weekend. Shirley May Barnes, who grew up on Mormon Row, shows old photos to her daughter, Donna Barnes Siddoway; her granddaughter, Angela Siddoway; and her son-in-law, Clark Siddoway.



PHOTO / JIM EVANS

## Finding all the people

By Alyson Smith

Where did the 700 people who attended the Mormon Row centennial celebration come from, and how were they located?

Bonnie Budge, a second-generation descendant, began by sending a chain letter to relatives she knew.

"Initially, I started out sending 80 or 90, but before I was through I'd sent 190," she said.

Many people were no doubt surprised to receive the letter reminding them of the 100th anniversary of the settlement of Mormon Row.

"I am sure people were not even aware that this was the 100th year," she said, "it was almost to the exact day."

On July 9, 1896, a Budge, a May, and a McBride camped out by the historic Menor's Ferry, located near Moose. On July 10, they crossed the ferry and found the spot, now Mormon Row, that they wanted to "prove up."

"The networking really spread," Bonnie Budge said.

to two original homesteading families, the Mays and the Moultons, also worked to locate descendants but for a different reason.

She put together genealogy charts for the May family.

"The ultimate goal was to start with James Ira May, since he was the first to homestead Mormon Row," May said. "But the chart got so huge that I had to break it down into separate charts for each of his three sons."

After spending three months working on the charts, she was able to compile family albums that covered 10 generations of the May family.

"I got a lot more information during the centennial, so I have a lot of changes to do," she said.

She offered to send charts to family members and received a lot of orders for them. She has been compiling information about her ancestors for 15 years, she said.

She said the centennial was the greatest experience, though, because she got to

## Preserving the Row

Over the past three years, Jack Neckles, superintendent of Grand Teton National Park and his staff have been instrumental in developing effective partnerships between GTNP, private citizens and interested groups for management of their rich and varied cultural resources. Few of us can truly appreciate the hundreds of issues, regulations, groups and individuals national park superintendents must contend with on a daily basis. For example,

GTNP has hundreds of buildings listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and a mandate for considering these resources within management planning. Balancing cultural resource concerns and other management issues can be daunting and frustrating.

There have been differences of opinion between the State Historic Preservation Office and GTNP with regard to the management of some cultural resources in GTNP. When appropriate we voice our concerns.

We feel it is important now to acknowledge important steps taken by Mr. Neckles and his staff in developing valuable partnerships, utilizing private funding and volunteer support and providing matching funds to stabilize several historic structures.

GTNP hired cultural resource specialist Mike Johnson in 1994. That same year, and again in 1995, the Moulton family was allowed to stabilize the T.A. Moulton barn, internationally recognized and currently visible on billboards across the state.

In 1995 and 1996 Ed Brown of Habitat for Humanity cooperated with GTNP, volunteers, Judith Crandall and other family members to stabilize structures at the Andy Chambers Homestead. For two years, the Teton County Historical Society in cooperation with GTNP staff have conducted site cleanups at the Bar BC Dude Ranch and the John Moulton Homestead.

Last weekend scores of descendants of the original settlers coordinated with GTNP to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Grovont settlement. Grovont was a farming

nesday, July 24, 1996

and ranching community which predated the National Park and continued to flourish until the 1950s. Five generations of the original homestead families were present, along with a large number of interested visitors.

None of these projects was as easy as my summary makes them sound. I'm quite sure Mr. Neckles would have interesting observations about the difficulties overcome and how the details were eventually worked out. In spite of the problems, I have faith that Mr. Neckles will continue to pursue public private partnerships to assist GTNP in preserving cultural resources under their stewardship.

My staff and I are delighted to support such efforts and look forward to participation in future projects. They are excellent examples of what can be done when public and private entities work together to solve problems. Thank you, Mr. Neckles.

John T. Keck  
State Historic Preservation Officer

6A - JACKSON HOLE NEWS, Wednesday, September 4, 1996

## Preservation group aims for cooperation

It wouldn't be good if your grandchildren's grandchildren wouldn't be able to see some of America's history."

"You should go out to a restoration site, look around, sit down and think about how much you learned. What do you think the world would be like without restoration? The world wouldn't be very nice."

"I think it is important to restore the old buildings [sic] so that 30 generations from now can enjoy it as much as we do in our life time. Perhaps they might enjoy it more."

These wise words from the pencils of Kelly schoolchildren make a simple point: Historic preservation enhances our appreciation of the present and the past. They also demonstrate that the need to make a tangible connection with the past resides in all of us, regardless of age or sophistication.

Advocates of historic preservation in Jackson Hole have long understood the value and necessity of retaining at least some of the valley's most significant historic buildings. In recent years, with the frantic pace of development, many people have lamented the quickly changing quality of life here and, more specifically, mourned the loss of buildings which represent that life. There have been numerous significant historic buildings in Teton County, some of which were listed on the National Register of Historic Places, that have been lost.

Fortunately, the prognosis is not all that dreary. A number of recent developments suggest the Kelly schoolchildren may be able to share Jackson Hole's architectural heritage with their grandchildren after all.

Since 1993, Grand Teton National Park has worked with several Mormon Row families to restore the often-photographed T.A. Moulton barn and stabilize the Andy Chambers homestead. The park also put new roofs on Bar BC cabins and allowed volunteers to clean up that site as well as the John Moulton homestead and barn on Mormon Row.

Among other important historic structures, the building in which Jediah's Restaurant is located has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service welcomed volunteers from Youth Conservation Corps to restore and repair the elk refuge's Robert Miller House last summer.

Perhaps most significantly, the county commissioners recently created the Teton County Historic Preservation Board — one of 19 boards now

operating in Wyoming. A professional architect, archeologist and historian serve on the board, joined by other volunteer-citizens who share interest and concern about the county's heritage.

The duties of this board will include educating the public about preservation, compiling a master list of significant and archaeological sites in the county, encouraging and reviewing National Register nominations and commenting on federal and state actions that affect cultural resources on public lands.

The board will not, of course, interfere with private property rights. On the other hand, it will welcome the chance to work with private landowners who are interested in preservation.

Those unfamiliar with historic preservation sometimes worry about loss of private property rights or believe historic preservation is antithetical to the interests of wildlife.

Some people are concerned about the park. They argue that Grand Teton is meant to be a "natural" park and thus all vestiges of human presence should be eradicated (at least west of the Snake River). They maintain that historic preservation in Grand Teton violates "park values."

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board understands these worries and looks forward to addressing, ameliorating and working through them. The board has no interest in thwarting private property rights or shrinking wildlife habitat.

The board believes that settler structures can continue to exist amid nature, and that any perceived conflict between nature and history can be mitigated through open discussion and creative solutions. The board believes that the presence of historic structures enhances national park values and the enjoyment of visitors to Jackson Hole.

Of course, historic preservation costs money. In these days of shrinking federal budgets, saving historic structures on public lands often will require raising funds from the private sector. The board looks forward to encouraging, perhaps even shepherding, the kinds of public-private partnerships that will help resolve resources issues.

Through the Teton County Historic Preservation Board, preservation in Teton County now has a voice, a mechanism by which those who share the Kelly schoolchildren's concerns about the past will have a future.

Kurt Dubbe is president of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board.

### GUEST SHOT

KURT DUBBE

Dear Carol,

6/9/96  
Sorry we weren't home to receive your call, but we did want to congratulate you for getting the CLG Sheparded through the County Commissioners. You did a lot of work on the bylaws and the politics, and doing ad I appreciate all your effort!

You have made a great contribution toward historic preservation in Teton County! Best wishes,  
RL

June 22, 1996 • C.L.G. Tour of Historical Sites and Structures  
in Grand Teton National Park



Hunter - Hereford



at the  
Whitegrass  
Kurt Dubbe - Robin Hartnell - Sherry Smith



Sheila Bricker-Wade





Grand Teton National Park  
C.L.G. Members and Friends



Geraldine Lucas Cabin



geraldine lucas cabin



Russell's Cabin

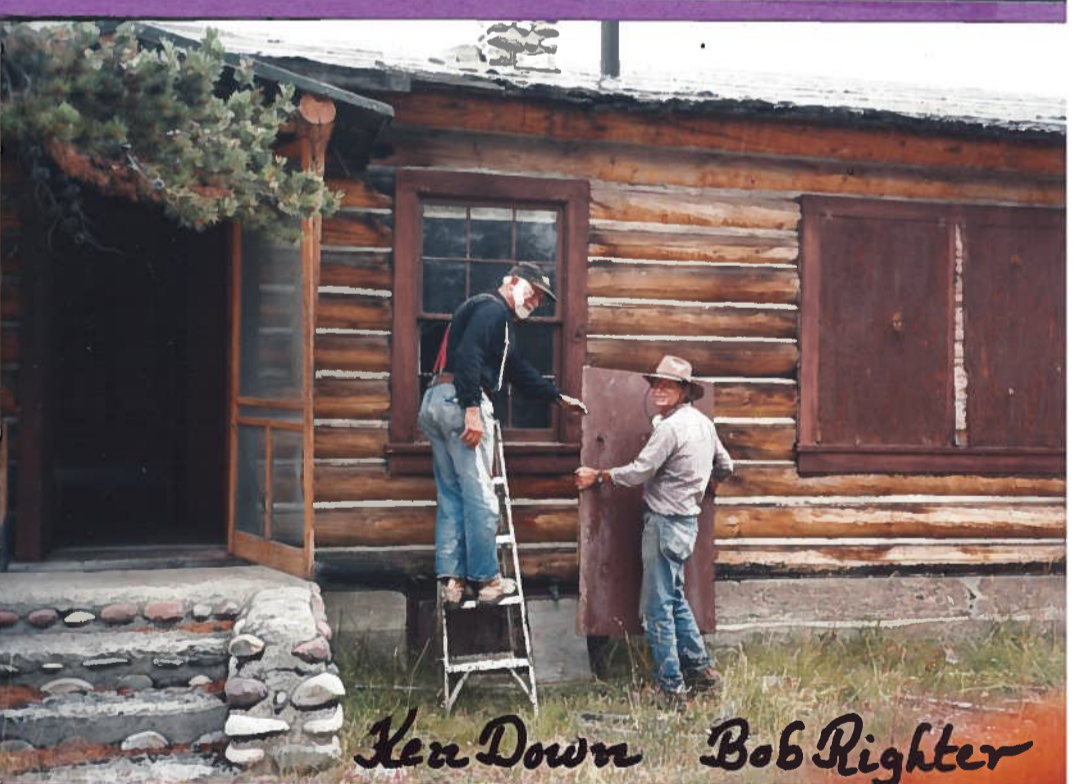


Russell's Cabin



Pat Miles

Russell's Cabin



Ken Down Bob Righter





Betty  
& Ken  
Down

Sherry Smith

Bob Richter



Lorna Miller

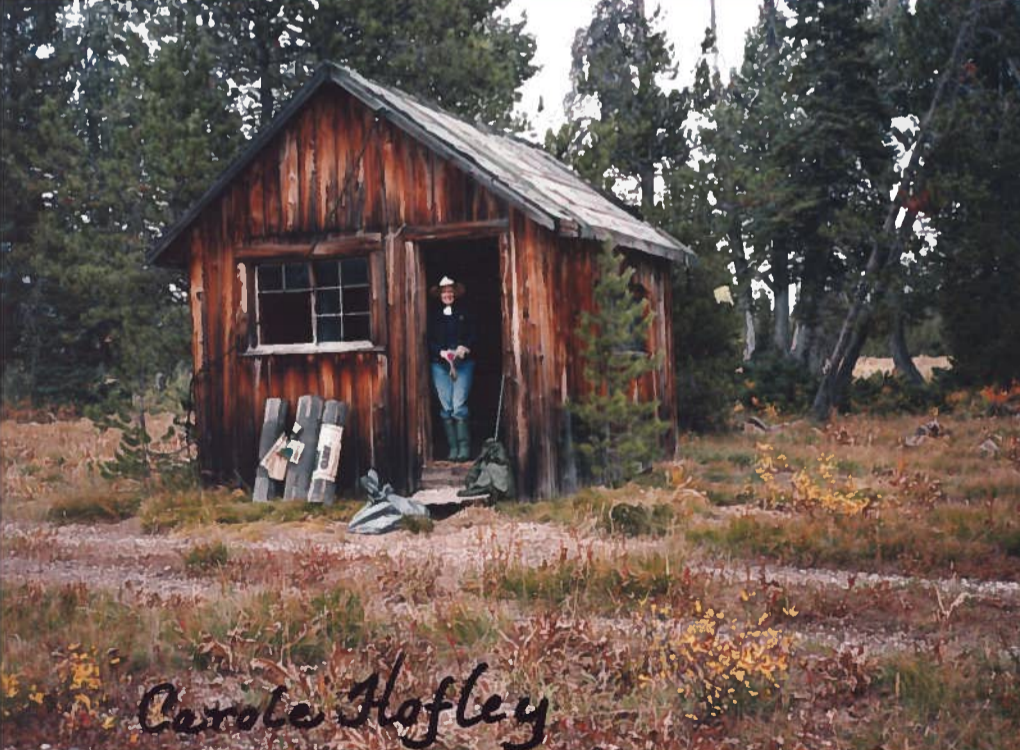


Hartnett  
Pat Miles

Sherry Smith  
Betty Down



Silver Jacobson  
Georgia Ligori



Carole Hofley



Lorna







6-25-97

# The Murie Legacy

■ Science School, Grand Teton Park join to create the Murie Center.

By Mark Huffman

An agreement to preserve the Murie Ranch in Grand Teton National Park was signed Tuesday during the Teton Science School's annual patrons' dinner.

Even more important than preserving the 77-acre ranch, the agreement between the park and the school laid the foundation to preserve the legacy of the Muries and their pioneer scientific and conservation work.

Under the agreement reached after two years of negotiation, the land becomes part of the park and will be operated by the Science School as a center for conservation education, offering symposia, teacher institutes and conferences.

Ninety-four-year-old Mardy Murie, the widow of naturalist Olaus Murie and herself a leader in the American conservation movement, will retain residency rights on the ranch as long as she is living. She and her husband bought the land in 1945, after he had already established a reputation with studies of wolves in Alaska, coyotes in Yellowstone National Park, and elk in Jackson Hole.

Though the new center will have some of the outward appearance of a think tank, Science School director Jack Shea said he hopes for more of a "do tank."

Shea credited Olaus and Mardy and Olaus' brother Adolph as people who combined science, education, writing, art and advocacy to conserve American wilderness and wildlife. Shea said the center will "continue that legacy by having people from all those disciplines come together to work on projects vital to conservation, and



NEWS FILE PHOTO

Mardy Murie's ranch in Grand Teton National Park will be preserved as a center for environmental education.

continue good work of the kind the Muries did."

Steve Iobst, the new assistant superintendent of Grand Teton Park, represented Superintendent Jack Neckels. Reading a letter from Neckels, Iobst said the park sees the center as a way to preserve the land and further the mission of the National Park Service to educate the public.

"Through our wildlands we experience a vulnerability and humility, which once embraced and understood can awaken a sense of purpose and strength," Iobst read. "That relationship had been a foundation in the Muries' lives."

Some programs sponsored by the Murie Center could be offered by this fall, or at latest by the spring of 1998, Shea said. Initially, those programs will be held mostly off the ranch.

While Mardy Murie lives on the ranch, the Science School will begin raising money for the project. The goal is to leave the ranch and its 17 buildings as close to their traditional state as possible, but with rehabilitation. Many of the buildings are in poor condition because of lack of money.

The park will extend utilities for the project. The Science School will raise about \$500,000 for immediate repairs and renovations, and would like to raise

at least that much for an endowment. Shea estimated annual operating costs would run from \$100,000 to \$150,000.

One source of money is income from a film being done about Mardy Murie by Jackson Hole filmmakers Bonnie Kreps and Charlie Craighead. Kreps, a longtime friend of the Murie family, called Mardy Murie "the mother of the American conservation movement" and a woman whose film biography will guarantee interest among the country's 10 million active environmentalists.

The film project began seven years ago, and lacks only money to be completed. Of the total budget of about \$415,000, about \$188,000 remains to be raised. Kreps and Craighead have been encouraged by PBS about the network showing the completed program.

Kreps and Craighead filmed Murie reminiscing and touring Jackson Hole several years ago and also filmed along the 550-mile Yukon route that Olaus and Mardy toured by dog sled on their honeymoon. Actor Harrison Ford has agreed to narrate the film, and John Denver has written a song for Murie that will be included.

Kreps and Craighead will donate net proceeds from the video cassette sales of the film to the Murie Center endowment fund.

10B - JACKSON HOLE NEWS, Wednesday, June 25, 1997

Kurt Dubbe of Jackson has been selected to participate in an upcoming program with the National Trust Preservation Leadership Training Institute. The program is designed for state-wide leaders who are in positions to influence preservation activities in their states. Dubbe is currently the president of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board.

7-9-97

## Commission appoints eight to boards

Teton County commissioners reappointed author Warren Adler to the Teton County Library board July 1 for a second term.

The Teton County Housing Authority board gained two new members: Scott Horn, whose unexpired term will last until January 2000, and Jack Nunn, who will hold his seat until January 2002.

Commissioners expanded the Teton County Historic Preservation board by one member to 11 seats. Carole Hofley, Silver Jacobson and Jamie Schoen were reappointed to the board. Deborah O'Malley and Ann Lynn were newly appointed to the board. All terms will expire in June 2000.

May 7, 1997

For Bill Resor Fax 733-3107  
From Carole Hofley Fax 739-3007 (phone 733-7727)

Dear Bill:

The TC Historic Preservation Board (CLG) has received a grant from SHPO to start a survey of historic structures, buildings and complexes in the county. Although a professional will be contracted, much of the "leg work" and assistance in the field this summer will be done by our board and interested volunteers in the community.

Nancy Weidel and Sheila Bricker-Wade from SHPO will come up from Cheyenne on June 6 and 7 to conduct a two-part workshop on the survey process.

Part 1 - 6/6 The intro will be Friday evening at 6' at our home followed by a potluck supper. (We would be pleased if you and Story could join us!)

Part 2 - 6/7 Hands-on training in the field. Measuring, documenting, etc. some examples likely to appear during the county survey.

Would it possible for the group to visit the Snake River Ranch on Saturday for this part of SHPO's training? The group would likely be between 10 to 16 people, and would be there about 1-1/2 hours. They would car pool to the ranch to eliminate a lot of vehicle traffic.

If you can help us out, we'd be most appreciative. Thank you!

Questions? Please call either myself or CLG chairman Kurt Dubbe at 733-9551





## WEEKEND ROUNDUP

### Historic confab this weekend

The Douglas Historic Preservation Commission and State Historic Preservation Office will host a free conference Friday and Saturday at the Wyoming Pioneer Museum.

A public reception at 6 p.m. Friday will kickoff the conference, "Preserving the Heritage of the Past: Sharing its Richness with the Future."

Kim Grant, director of development and membership for Historic Denver, will be the keynote speaker. The conference will give updates on preservation efforts throughout Wyoming and will include tours of the museum, Douglas Railroad Interpretive Center and residential district.

For more information, Call Nancy Weidel at the State Historic Preservation Office, 777-6312.

**Kurt Dubbe, Carole Hofley and Robin Hartnett**, members of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board a C.L.G., attended the state Historic Preservation Offices Annual State C.L.G. and Historic Preservation Conference held April 25-26 in Douglas, Wyo.

The conference was an opportunity for Dubbe, Hofley and Hartnett to learn firsthand about the preservation efforts currently under way in the state.



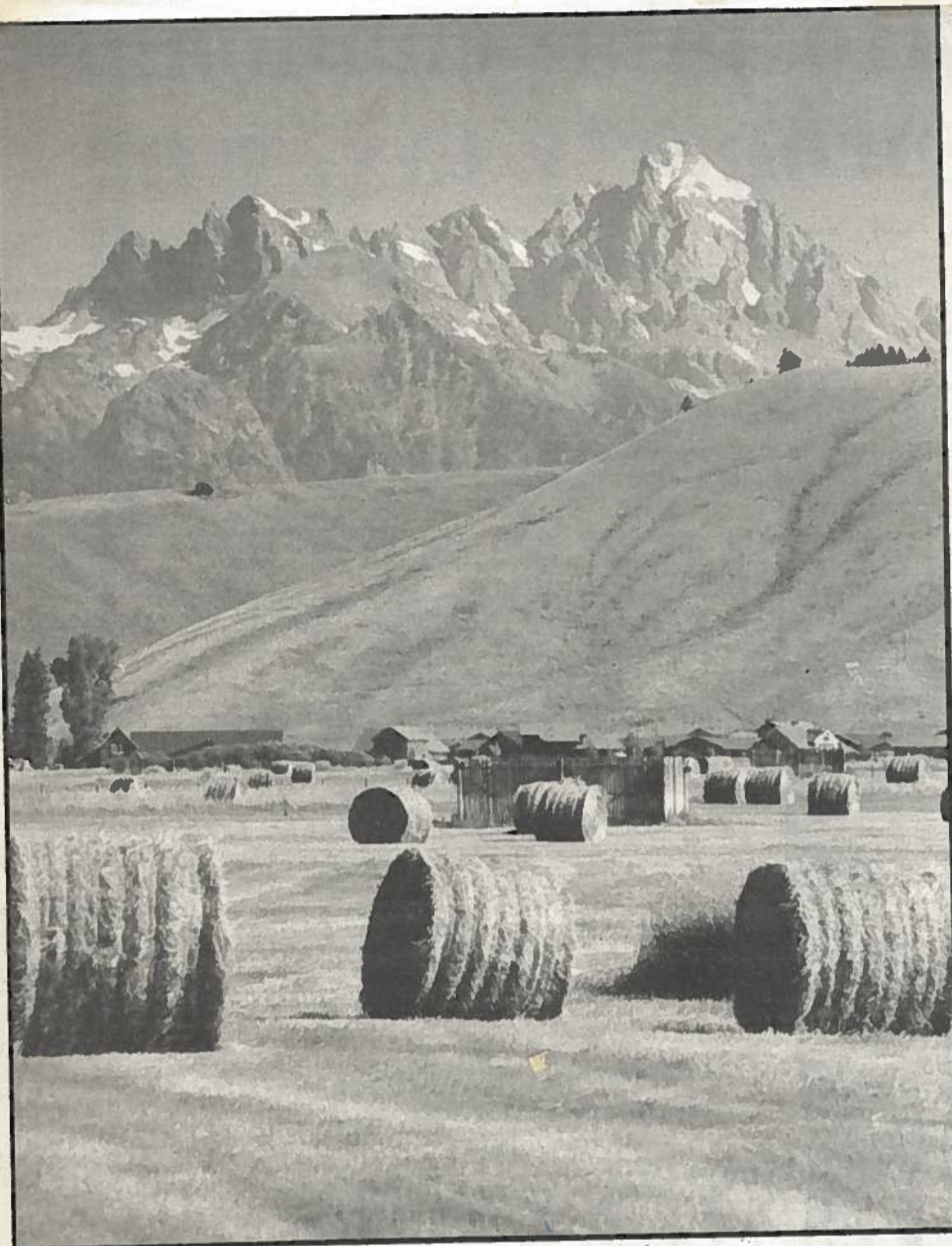
(Photo by Jeanie Bright)

### An historic moment

The 1997 Wyoming Certified Local Government Annual Conference was held last weekend in Douglas. Keynote speaker and Director of Development and Membership for Historic Denver Kim Grant (from left) pauses from chatting with Robin L.A. Hartnett of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board and Douglas Mayor Kenny Taylor at the networking reception Friday night. The conference was an idea exchange between members of historical preservation groups from across the state.







Modern hay bales have replaced the haystacks this season at the Jackson Hole Hereford Ranch.

## Beaver slides are gone, and with them an era

■ Jackson Hole Hereford Ranch converts to bales.

By Angus M. Thuermer Jr.

Something's missing in South Park.

The haystacks of the Jackson Hole Hereford Ranch, so long a landmark in Jackson Hole, have been replaced by round bales.

Until two weeks ago, winter feed for the Hereford herd was put up in bulk. It was stored in elk- and cow-proof bins, known as bents, which dotted the ranch like overgrown bread loaves.

Although it didn't look like that many, between 90 and 100 haystacks dotted the 800-acre ranch. They held enough hay for about 800

cows and bulls.

They were put up with a beaver slide — a long ramp with a sliding mammoth pitchfork which hoisted loose hay into the bents. Power from an old tractor ran the beaver slide rake.

Wire mesh backstops and side-stops kept the stacks in shape as they were built. Cut and dried hay was gathered from the pasture by backwards-running jalopies fitted with rakes.

Warren Robertson, who oversaw the ranch for years, said years ago he thought the beaver slide originated in Montana. The ones used on the Hereford Ranch were the last in operation in Jackson Hole.

Family members wouldn't say why the old technique was abandoned.



The Teton County Historical Preservation Board will survey historic buildings in the county, beginning with rural buildings, to see if they can be saved.

## Project begins to survey historic valley buildings

■ Historic Preservation Board uses state grant for first major work.

By Mark Huffman

A survey of important historical buildings on private land in Teton County will begin in coming weeks as the first major project of Teton County Historical Preservation Board.

The board, created a year ago by town and county government, will use \$7,200 this year to begin the survey, which might take as long as five years of part-time work. The money was a grant from the State Historical Preservation Office.

The work is important as the county is developed, said historian Michael Cassity, and is "not just a list of old barns" in the county.

"We tend to think of Teton County as a lot of beautiful scenery and wildlife and to think the contribution of human society to the area has been pretty negligible," Cassity said from his home in Laramie. "But as we take a look at the contributions of people going back to the very beginning of the 19th century, we can see a complex and dynamic society, and the more we can learn about it, the more we can appreciate it."

Preservation board president Kurt Dubbe, a Jackson architect with an interest in historic structures, said the county's architectural past is woven with the history of its people. And he noted that recording the history of old buildings and the people who built them is important now, as memories pass into history.

"We are blessed with a handful of old timers still alive who can recount firsthand the building of these old structures," Dubbe said.

Cassity agreed the time is slipping away to document not just the buildings, but how people used them.

"So much of the history of Teton County is still in the hands of first- or second-generation families," he said. "But it won't be much longer."

Cassity and Dubbe said the oral histories gathered from old timers will play an important part in the architectural survey. This first work will concentrate on the county's rural areas; work next summer will

probably focus more on the town of Jackson.

That's also important, Dubbe said, because "there are numerous structures within the town that are threatened right now."

"We may not be able to save all these buildings, but we want to create a record of important structures."

Though the board is now focused on the survey work, Dubbe said it is legally authorized to apply for government and private grants for more substantial work, and that restoration projects might be done in years to come.

The board can also arrange tax credits for people who preserve historic buildings and is interested in getting some local buildings on the National Historic Register. The register notes important buildings and gives owners a chance to win tax advantages for their preservation work, but imposes no restrictions on how they use or alter the property.

**"We may not be able to save all these buildings, but we want to create a record of important structures."**

— Kurt Dubbe

PRESERVATION BOARD PRESIDENT

Cassity is a retired University of Wyoming history Ph.D. with an interest in American social history in the American West.

Other work by the preservation board includes obtaining National Register status for the Wort Hotel and working with Grand Teton National Park to preserve historic buildings in the park, including the Chambers homestead on Mormon Row.

Other members of the board are Bob Rudd, Silver Jacobson, Georgia Ligori, Robin Harnett, Carol Hofley, Joan Grever, Lorna Miller, Jamie Schoen, Ann Lynn and Deborah O'Malley.

# Historic town center may face big changes

■ New-property owner expected to announce plans within weeks.

By Melanie Harrice

The new owner of much of the original Jackson townsite might restore and develop the Jackson Hole Playhouse and surrounding property.

Nu Skin founder Nedra Roney purchased the land in the northwest quadrant of Glenwood and Deloney from Dave Young on Aug. 18. Young said Roney told him that she might develop the area surrounding the Playhouse in "a year or two" and that she planned to restore the theatre itself, and possibly expand it.

"She said that maybe sometime she would wish to expand the playhouse theatre but ... that was just one of her proposed ideas," Young said.

Roney did not answer attempts to contact her this week. Her assistant, Paula Wells, said plans for the property are not yet final and that Roney intended to announce the details within a few weeks, but not before then.

"There are some really great things that maybe we'd like to say about our plan," Wells said. "We can't yet because we haven't finalized a lot of things."

Roney purchased the Jackson Hole Playhouse, Vivi's Gallery, an empty watch repair shop, the Taj Mahal Curry Co., the Sugarfoot Cafe and Lotions and Potions from Young on Aug. 18.

The remaining available property on the quadrant, Studio 2000, was sold to her by Teresa Geuke, Young said. No public record of that transaction exists, and Geuke refused to comment. Roney does not own Jackson Hole Historical Society Museum and Thoenig's Fine Jewelry.

Reactions from business owners on the block were mixed.

Vicki Garnick, who runs the Playhouse with her husband, said she believes Roney probably will preserve the historic value of the building.

"I feel fairly sure that she's not going to change the historicity of the theatre," she said. "Then again, you can never say 'never'....People don't come from thousands of miles to look at drywall."

Diane Belford said she recently relocated her store, Artistic Jewelry, from 135 N. Glenwood to the Broadway Shops because she was "kept in the dark about the future of the property" and was in a "precarious situation" without a lease.

A week before she was told about the sale, she said she "heard that the buildings were going to be torn down."

Lotions and Potions business owner Frances Spencer had no comment about the sale, and Thoenig's Fine Jewelry co-owner Robin Thoenig said nobody had approached her about buying their building.

Taj Mahal Curry Co. owner Alan Blackburn said he is hopeful his new landlord will appreciate the history of the area, and Diane Tjenos, co-owner of the Sugarfoot Cafe, said she is excited about the new ownership.

Kurt Dubbe, an architect and the president of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board, said the original townsite is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

But some research on the original townsite properties already has been compiled by old-timers and other residents.

Dubbe said board members generally would like to see the townsite — which was the town center before the Town Square was developed — designated as an historic site.

The 81-year-old Playhouse is the oldest historic building in Jackson that remains at its original site.

# County approves, 3-2, high public notice bid

By Roger Hayden  
Jackson Hole Guide

Teton County commissioners decided Tuesday to accept the high bid in determining which local newspaper should publish public notices for the coming year.

In a 3-2 vote the commissioners broke from publishing in the *Jackson Hole Guide* for nine of the past 10 years and chose the *Jackson Hole News* as their official newspaper.

Tuesday's decision meant the county will publish all of its required public notices in the *News* for the next year.

According to figures provided to commissioners Tuesday, the decision will cost \$7,000 more this year based on last year's ad totals. The county paid the *Guide* \$20,000 last year. It anticipates paying the *News* \$27,000 for the same amount of space for the coming year.

The *Guide*, which had charged \$1.85 per column inch, offered the same rate this year.

The *News* bid was for \$2.50 per column inch.

*News* publisher Mike Sellett argued that, because the *News* has a larger circulation, "It's cheaper per capita" to publish in his paper.

The *News* has a circulation of 7,469; the *Guide's* circulation is 4,836.

Two commissioners, Bob Shervin and Bill Paddleford, chose the *Guide* because of the lower cost.

Commissioners Sandy Shuptrine, Ann Stephenson and Mike Gierau said they wanted to switch. They said they

two newspapers equal business from county government.

"Unfortunately, the cost is a factor, but I also feel it's important to share the public business with our newspapers," Stephenson said.

But the three commissioners' decision based on a desire to provide each paper with equal business could ultimately cost the county more from now on.

Since the majority of commissioners were not basing their decision on cost, neither paper has a reason to offer lower rates in future bids, said Business Manager Al Renneisen.

## Commissioner wrap-up

A history expert and consultant will begin a survey to identify and catalog historic buildings in Jackson Hole.

Teton County commissioners approved a \$7,200 contract Tuesday to hire Michael Cassity of Laramie to conduct the survey as a first step for the Teton County Historical Preservation Board. The money came to the county from the Wyoming Historic Preservation Office.

Formed by county commissioners more than a year ago, the board's aim is to preserve some of the valley's rapidly disappearing landmarks. The board wants to educate the public about the area's history as well.

Cassity's task will be to "identify historical structures with original integrity and explore the history of each," according to a board press release.

The board has several specific projects in addition to the survey. They include

# Preservation member calls for new policy

■ Historic buildings may be protected if Jackson enacts new codes.

By Melanie Harrice

Teton County and Jackson need a new planning policy that would preserve historical sites from development and deterioration, some feel.

Kurt Dubbe, who is president of the Historical Preservation Board and practices with Dubbe Moulder Architects, said that none currently exists and that planners need to implement a policy that addresses historical issues.

"Neither the town nor the county have on their books any policy addressing historical issues," Dubbe said. "... We can't just remain talking about something, because important historic structures are crumbling through neglect or are being destroyed on the heels of development."

The recent purchase of the original town site, which is a cluster of historical buildings on Glenwood and Deloney, raised concerns regarding the future of the property. The new owner, Nedra Roney, may develop the property, and may change the 81-year-old Jackson Hole Playhouse, which is the oldest building in Jackson still on its original site. The property can be developed because no policy exists that would preserve it.

Any historical building can be altered, razed or redeveloped, regardless of its age and significance. Recognition by the National Register of Historic Places does not offer a building any protection; it is simply a form of recognition. It does not affect



The Jackson Hole Playhouse is said to be the oldest building in town on its original site. Only town regulation would ensure its preservation.

an owner's rights.

Only local laws can guarantee that buildings are saved.

Mayor Barney Oldfield said historical preservation is an important issue that needs to be addressed.

"Generally speaking, I am a firm believer in preserving the heritage of our historical buildings," he said. "... I think it's a great idea. I'd definitely like to start the dialogue, and now is an excellent time to do so."

Dubbe said some sort of policy must be implemented that protects these buildings from alteration.

"If there was any policy that said a property owner can't alter a property without prior approval from this board, then that's some degree of protection," Dubbe said.

To be recognized by the National Register, a building must be at least 50 years old, and must have some historical or architectural significance.

Dubbe, who is on the state's consulting committee which reviews nominations, said a building must undergo a three-step process to be added to the National Register. First, an application must be filled out. This is an "extensive" form that outlines the building's history and identifies all its "character defining features." Usually an application is put together by the historical society, a preservation group or citizens "who have a hell of a lot of time on their hands."

"Teton County is blessed by a lot of

folks, particularly some old timers around here that have a strong interest in the history of the county," he said.

Buildings that have been renovated or altered to the point where they no longer have any architectural significance will be denied historical status.

Next, a state's consulting committee reviews the nomination, and then recommends that the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C., either approve or deny the historical status.

One drawback is that the process can be time-consuming. "It could take three to six months, or it could take a couple of years," Dubbe said.

Gene Hoffman, a Realtor and appraiser, said there is a need for a protected historic district as long as current building owners are in favor of it.

The buildings on the original town site, bordered by Glenwood Street and Deloney Avenue, and some buildings on the Town Square could be eligible for future designation as historic districts because they have not been significantly altered.

"That's the only remnant of downtown Jackson Hole that's left," Hoffman said. "Everything else has been significantly altered until it has no resemblance to the past."

A fair amount of the research necessary for acceptance to the National Register already has been done on the original town site property.

Dubbe said the Board is interested in designating it a historical site through the National Register. But until a new policy is implemented, this designation would not protect buildings from deterioration or development.

Oldfield said he is not sure whether he would be in favor of creating protected historic districts, designating small "pockets" or designating each building individually.

"It is important that we maintain our heritage. I hate to see old buildings torn down and destroyed just to build something new and modern."

County Commissioner Mike Gireau said the commissioners rely on the preservation board for recommendations on how to protect historical buildings. He said he was in favor of creating policy that would protect these sites.

Right now, the Historic Preservation Board is preparing an application for the Wort Hotel that will be submitted within a year. The board also has identified the Cowboy Bar and Jackson Drug as "two important structures that we feel are eligible for nomination."

Jedediah's and St. John's Episcopal Church and Rectory are the only buildings in Jackson that are listed with the National Register.

Historic Preservation Board member Joan Grever recently completed an inventory of historic structures in the town. The board received a grant from the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office and plan to document possible historic properties on private land within Teton County. At a later date, the board will determine which of these properties are eligible for nomination for the historic register.

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board, which was established in June 1996, identifies, protects and preserves Teton County's historical, archaeological and cultural heritage.

Building owners can be eligible for certain tax incentives and historical preservation grants.

## J.H. News 9.24.97 Historic concept needs airing

Many who live in Jackson Hole want to protect the valley's heritage. But when it comes time to weigh that heritage against economic gain, history often loses.

Such can be the case with older buildings in Jackson. There is no federal or state law that protects structures of historic importance — such insurance must come from local governments. The concept of protecting the remaining historic buildings in Jackson is worthy of study. A survey would tell residents what's important, what's just junk. Studying and preserving historic buildings might give us a link to our heritage and help us gain a better perspective on our growing community.

**B** Far Afield — 2B  
Close-Up — 3B  
New West — 4B  
People, Question — 9B

# TETON STYLE



Is the Bronc's Homecoming a bust?  
See On Campus, page 8B.

Wednesday, October 8, 1997

Jackson Hole News



NEWS PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / GARTH DOWLING

The Buckenroth House is one of more than 230 historic buildings in Jackson that could disappear without town or county protection.

## It's History

### Jackson's oldest buildings stand, and fall, unprotected by law

BY MELANIE HARRICE

Propped up on skids and looking out of place among many newly built town homes sits an elegant, 68-year-old house representing an irreplaceable part of Jackson's history.

The quaint, wood-framed Buchenroth House — the first in Jackson to have indoor plumbing — recently was sold by the Town of Jackson to a local developer who is unsure of his plans for it. At this point, the house could remain in Jackson or it could be transported out of town.

If it were to leave town, a piece of Jackson's history would go with it.

The Buchenroth House is one of more than 230 potentially historic buildings in Jackson that could be lifted onto skids and carted away. Right now Teton County and Jackson can do nothing to protect these sites from deterioration or demolition. Some local experts feel the county needs a new planning policy



NEWS PHOTO / GARTH DOWLING

Some advocate laws to preserve historic sites.

that would preserve these historical sites.

"Neither the town nor the county have on their books any policy addressing historical issues," said Kurt Dubbe, president of the Historical Preservation Board and an architect with Dubbe Moulder Architects.

"We can't just remain talking about something, because important historic structures are crumbling through neglect or are being destroyed on the heels of development."

Right now any historic building can be altered or developed regardless of its age and significance. Certification by the National Register of Historic Places does not offer a building any protection; it is simply a form of recognition, and does not affect an owner's rights.

To be recognized by the National Register, a structure must be at least 50 years old and have some historical significance.

The Buchenroth House fits that bill, having

Continued on page 6B

# It's History



The fate of Buchenroth House is uncertain.

Continued from cover

been built around 1929 by Mildred and Felix "Buck" Buchenroth, Sr.

"That house served as a physical link to the past, and its rich history fulfills a nostalgic need in people," said Joan Grever, president of the Teton County Historical Preservation Board. "And it possibly could have qualified to be on the National Register of Historic Places."

In part, its eligibility would have depended on the extent of alterations made to the house, Grever pointed out. But either way, the building is a town historic landmark, she said.

Barbara Ahr, the Buchenroth's daughter-in-law, said she does not believe any alterations were made, but something could have been renovated before she was born.

For most of its 68 years, the house sat near the fire station on Pearl Street, Ahr said.

"It was the only building out there and it was in the sagebrush."

The house was not the only one to play a role in Jackson's history: Its owners also made important contributions to the community. During his lifetime, Buchenroth became the president of Jackson State Bank by purchasing controlling interest. He was also on the founding board of directors of the hospital. And while Buchenroth was busy raising money to build the hospital, his wife was busy working as one of the founding members of the Hospital Auxiliary, Ahr said.

"One of [the auxiliary's] primary duties was to go to the hospital to wash and roll bandages."

She also was on the board that raised money to build the library, and at one point was chairman of the board of Jackson State Bank.

When Felix Buchenroth, Sr. died, his wife sold the land and house to the town with the stipulation that she could live there until she died.

## 'Always loved that home'

"She had always loved that home and never had any desire to move and live anywhere else," Ahr said. "She lived in that house since 1928 and died peacefully in that house in 1994."

The town took possession of it after she died. Later it was moved to its temporary site at 300 E. Kelly Ave. Within the last year the town sold it to an individual who has not decided whether to keep or to sell the home.

Like the Buchenroth House, the stately Mercill House was architecturally significant just after the turn of the century. Built sometime between 1915 and 1929, the elegant log home at 280 S. Willow is one of Jackson's historical treasures. At the time it was built by the Mercill family it was the only two-story log cabin in town.

Barbara Della Corte purchased the house and guesthouse in 1987, when she was 24 years old, because she fell in love with it. She's put a lot of that love back into the house.



Mercill House, now owned by Barbara Della Corte, once housed the town hairdresser on its porch.

She and her husband restored the log home's rather unique interior, which was considered quite fancy at the time it was built.

"Instead of having a log interior, they cut the rounded parts of the logs off, flattened the logs by shaving them, and then covered them with lace and plaster," Della Corte explained. "It looks like a normal plaster wall but instead of being really smooth it has irregularities."

The house has its original wood floors, high ceilings, and is decorated with lovely antique furniture.

The Mercill House served a number of interesting purposes during its long life. At one point its porch housed the town hairdresser, and the guesthouse was a fancy dress shop. During the last six years the house has had two fires, one of which almost destroyed it.

The Mercill House has at least one other claim to history: At one time, it housed someone famous — famous, that is, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A few years ago, Della Corte and her husband rented the house to a stockbroker who had impeccable references. Then one Christmas Eve he disappeared while the two were out of town, apparently absconding with a great deal of money.

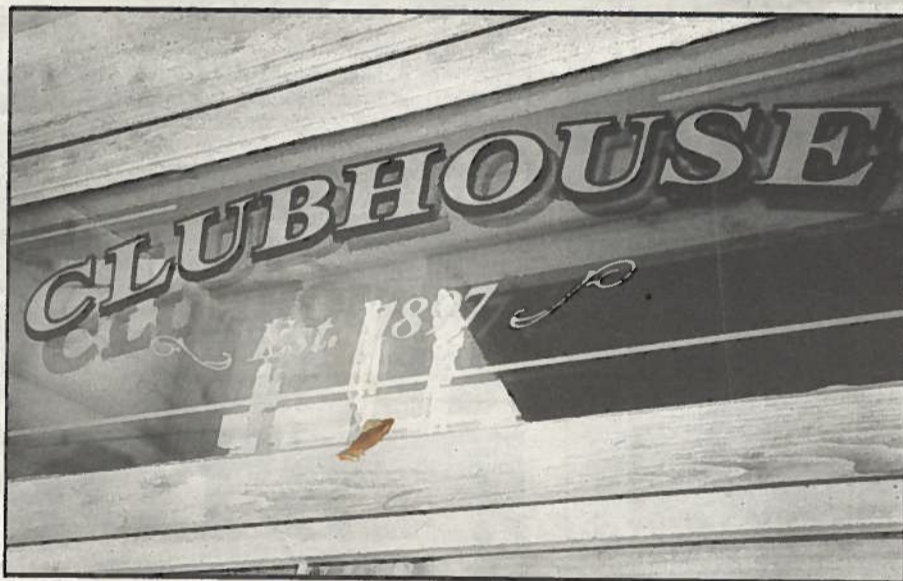
Later it turned out he was wanted by the FBI.

To top things off, when the two returned from their trip, they discovered the pipes in the house had frozen.

Della Corte heard nothing from him for a long time, until he suddenly called and asked for his deposit back.

"I asked him for his address so I could Fed Ex it to him," she said chuckling. "I never heard from him again."

The Lamb Barn is another historic site that has kept a rather low-profile through the years. The



Built as a social hub by the Jackson Hole Gun Club in 1895, the Clubhouse is the oldest town building on its original site.

lovely old barn, still located at 780 E. Hansen St., is on a piece of property that was considered one of the largest in town until recently.

Built in 1945, George Lamb bought it when he retired so he could raise Palomino horses. Thomas Knowlton Lamb III, 76, who still lives in his childhood home with his wife Cile, said that horses were his father's passion.

"He was retired and that was his whole interest in life."

## Horse of a different sort

George Lamb had about 14 horses, but one was different from the rest. By all accounts, Thumper was a very unusual horse that happily did all sorts of unusual tricks for his human friend.

"He'd have him get up on a teeter-totter that he built from wide boards about 20 feet long and about two feet wide. And he'd get on there and walk to the center and teeter back and forth," Tom Lamb said.

Thumper also was well-known around town. He and Lamb made

regular visits inside the Wort Hotel.

"Dad used to take Thumper into the Wort Hotel. It was a wilder world in those days."

The barn also was used for social functions that drew in many town residents, such as regular barn dances.

Lamb's wife sold the property and barn to the May family around 1956 just after Lamb died. She also sold the horses, except for Thumper who stayed with Tom.

Some historical structures built when early settlers homesteaded in the valley are more widely known than the Mercill and Buchenroth Houses. One of Jackson's most famous buildings was built just as the first ranches were popping up in the valley, at a time when the town had little in the way of a commercial industry, no shops, no school and no place to socialize.

So, the residents got together and built the Jackson Hole Gun Club, whose mission was to "better social and commercial conditions" in Jackson according to its charter.



NEWS PHOTOS / GARTH DOWLING

George Lamb bought this lovely old barn on East Hanson Street to stable his beloved Palomino horses. The barn was built in 1945.



Mill House combines frontier architecture and Newcomer Park...



The old Van Vleck house (a.k.a. Jedediah's House of Sourdough) sports corners that were cut and squared by axe and peeled with a draw knife.

The Clubhouse, as the building at 50 through 90 Center St. on the East side of the Town Square was later known, was built in 1896 and is the oldest town building on its original site. It presently houses Hines Goldsmiths, Good Goods and the Jackson Hole Tram Dock.

Back then it was the social hub, holding a dance almost every Saturday night, with folks arriving by wagon or horseback. While everyone was busy dancing, the horses munched hay outside, often with a few hungry elk to keep them company.

In 1903, the building held Jackson's first school, its 17 students using wooden boxes as make-shift desks.

It also housed Roy and Frank Van Vleck's Jackson Mercantile Co., one of the first shops here.

**Potato traders**

In the fall of 1906, two young men were traveling through town with a load of potatoes and little else. The Van Vlecks found they

homesteaders really liked the Van Vleck's potatoes, so the two decided to stick around. They traded potatoes for money and started up their business, selling kerosene, dry goods and farm tools, among other things.

Roy Van Vleck settled down and continued his unusual courtship of his childhood sweetheart, Genevieve. The two corresponded by mail for 10 years until 1910 when Van Vleck built her a cabin, known today as Jedediah's House of Sourdough. Soon after they married.

Van Vleck's wife later went on to become a councilwoman on what was the first all-women government in the United States.

The Clubhouse and many of the other 230 sites which could be eligible for the National Register also happen to sit on pieces of land that have high property values. In fact the Clubhouse sits right on the Town Square, which is surrounded by some of the most valuable land in Jackson.

Maybe it's safe for another few

*“Important historic structures are crumbling through neglect or are being destroyed on the heels of development.”*

— Kurt Dubbe  
PRESIDENT, HISTORICAL PRESERVATION BOARD

# be used in fire-training

■ Leek's Lodge is in disrepair and would cost about \$250,000 to restore.

By Melanie Harrice

Leek's Lodge, one of Grand Teton National Park's registered historic sites, may be burned in a fire-training exercise if a buyer cannot be found.

The 70-year-old, split-level, log building was the summer home of Steven N. Leek, one of the valley's most prominent early settlers. And it has fallen into disrepair.

"To lose such a local gem would be tragic to say the least," said Kurt Dubbe, a member of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board and an architect. "The park, for good or for bad, has chosen not to maintain it adequately."

Mike Johnson, GTNP Cultural Resource Specialist, said the decision to let that happen was made years ago, during an era with a different philosophy.

"The park just didn't feel that Stephen Leek and the story of that site were so important that they wanted to spend a lot of money on that site," he said. The log building probably would cost about \$250,000 to restore, and the Park's limited funds would be better spent on other historic sites, he said.

The park has 268 historic buildings, Dubbe said. "All buildings have some historic value and significance, but the reality is you do have to prioritize them," he said. "The park realizes they have to pick their battles carefully. I wish they had more money and more manpower to dedi-



Steven N. Leek

cate to that, but they don't." Johnson said the lodge is a liability and is "no longer useful," and if it is not sold or burned, its parts would be used in restoring other sites. Also, since the site has lost its "pristine wilderness" setting and is now flanked by a marina and a paved parking lot, it is a "tough preservation sell."

Last year, the Park sold the lodge to a long-time Jackson resident who wanted to preserve the building. She has been unable to come up with the funds to pay for its removal and restoration. She had until Oct. 1 to remove the building.

A glimmer of hope remains, Dubbe said. "A prospective buyer is planning a trip to Jackson during the last couple of days in October," he said. If that falls through, there is little the preservation board can do.

"We have been formally notified that GTNP had exhausted all possibilities for saving the building," Dubbe said. "This literally is the last step.... We don't have any legal recourse beyond these private efforts."

"Sadly, I think the last step would be to go up there and shed a few tears while that building is being burned."

The lodge is on the National Register of Historic Places. Leek arrived in Jackson Hole in 1888 and became a leading wildlife conservationist, helping establish the National Elk Refuge.

cles in the *News* that have addressed historic preservation issues in Jackson Hole. Last week's articles on Leek's Lodge and historic preservation planning in Grand Teton National Park provided valuable insight into park historic preservation issues. However, I feel there are a couple of issues that need further clarification. The article implied that there would be no preservation work on National Register properties until a management plan is finally approved. Preservation work on historic properties is ongoing with several projects planned for the next year. The management plan for historic structures that is under development will provide guidance to insure that future preservation efforts are directed to our most significant historic sites.

This past year, major historic preservation projects were completed on the AMK Ranch, Crandall Studio, Mormon Row, and Bar BC Dude Ranch. Ongoing preservation maintenance is performed by park staff supplemented by contracted work. Significant work has also been accomplished by volunteers. Many volunteers came from outside the valley at their own expense to work on historic sites. One group of carpenters from Michigan come year after year and are planning to return again next year to work on Mormon Row barns. Local volunteers have also contributed. Volunteers will continue to be an integral part of Grand Teton National Park's historic preservation program.

Michael Johnson  
Cultural Resources Specialist  
Grand Teton National Park

JACKSON HOLE NEWS, Wednesday, October 22, 1997 - 7A

## Park ranks historic sites for restoration and repair

By Melanie Harrice

Grand Teton National Park is prioritizing its 36 historic sites to target which should be restored.

These ratings will be part of a comprehensive management plan for park historic structures, which should be completed by next spring.

Until the plan is implemented, which will not happen before spring 1999, no repairs or restoration will take place.

Kurt Dubbe, a member of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board and an architect, said this slow process means some buildings will undergo "demolition through neglect," and a number of buildings are already in "terrible shape."

"As important as these evaluation processes are, something has to be done now to stabilize these structures," he said.

Mike Johnson, GTNP cultural resource specialist, agreed that the process has been a slow one.

"The Park Service moves at a glacial pace," he said. "It's very frustrating." He said it has taken the Park 15 years of research to get to this point.

Dubbe said his board would "encourage them to accelerate that program."

But right now, the park needs to concentrate on doing temporary repairs, and the easiest way to do this is to organize local volunteer groups to get the work done, he said.

"There's tremendous support for this and interest."

Johnson agreed that this was a good idea but thought it would be difficult to recruit enough volunteers. He said he tried to do just that a few years ago.

Once the plan is in place, most of the funding for locally significant

buildings, which make up nearly all of the Park's sites, will have to come from outside sources.

"We'll have to work on a combination of public and private fund raising for their preservation," Johnson said. "There's very little [Park Service funding] for local sites."

Typically, park funds only are available for buildings that are nationally significant. The park has only two of these sites.

One possibility is that the the park could match each donation, dollar for dollar, Johnson said.

The park has 268 buildings on 36 sites. Twenty three of the sites fulfill a park function and are well-maintained. The rest need repairs and restoration.

Once the plan is implemented, some of the buildings on these sites will be stabilized or repaired, while others will be restored, and still others left to deteriorate.

Of the 268 buildings, about 200 are already on the National Register of Historic Places, but this designation offers no protection from demolition or deterioration. The rating process may help save numerous park structures.

Representatives from the the Teton County Historic Preservation Board, the Jackson Hole Historical Society, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Wyoming State Preservation Office and the National Park Service participated in the initial site-ranking visits on Oct. 3 and 4.

Once the park completes its ranking process and designs its management plan, then SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) and the Preservation Board must approve them before the plan can be implemented.

Johnson said this is one of the first rating systems of its kind within the national-park system.

### Important stories 9/22/97

The *News* received the following copy of a letter to Jack Neckels, Superintendent, Grand Teton National Park:

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your fine staff for requesting suggestions and comments in your recent re-evaluation process of the historic structures in Grand Teton National Park from the following interested groups: our board, Jackson Hole Historical Society, State of Wyoming Historic Preservation Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Advisory Council of Historic Preservation, National Park Service and Yellowstone National Park Cultural Resources Department.

It was particularly gratifying to note that you and your staff are placing greater emphasis on protecting and interpreting those cultural resources which represent the important stories of Jackson Hole and The Old West of Grand Teton National Park.

Teton County  
Historic Preservation Board

# Students examine historic Wort Hotel

■ Preservation group prepares to nominate the building with the help of local students.

By Melanie Harrice

Jackson's Wort Hotel could end up on the National Register for Historic Places, with the instrumental help of three high school architecture students.

The Teton County Historical Preservation Board recently decided to nominate the Wort for historic status and has enlisted the help of the three students who want to become architects.

Frances Hughes, 18, Ben Bauman, 17, and Ian Curry, 17, were chosen from one of Jackson Hole High School's drafting classes to help out with the project.

On Saturday they performed an architectural survey of the hotel with some help from Preservation Board member Joan Grever. They evaluated and recorded the architectural features, such as the style of the windows, design, the shape of the roof and the hotel's ornamental features.

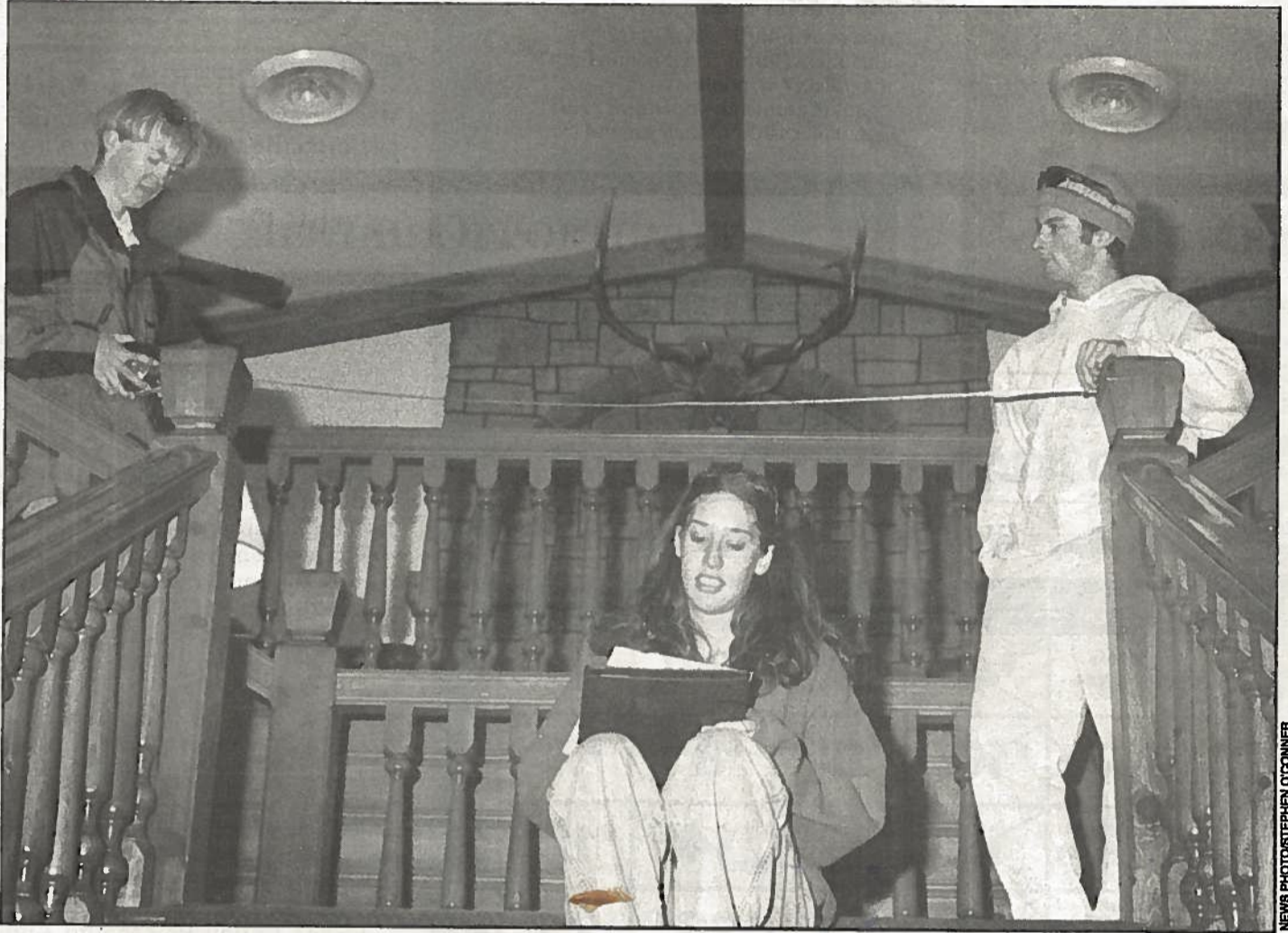
"Their role is to document the existing condition of the hotel using measured drawings and photographs of the interior and exterior," architect Barry Dennis said. "Once we have all the photos we'll try to relate those back to historic photos."

The group will compare the drawings and photos taken Saturday with old photos of the Wort stored in the state archives in Cheyenne. The information will help those overseeing the National Register to determine whether the Wort is historically significant.

The National Register is an official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures, and objects that have played an important role in the nation's historical, cultural, or architectural development. But listing on the register does not protect historic buildings from demolition.

Protective laws must be passed first.

Some town and county officials have expressed preliminary support for local regulations that would protect for historic buildings and sites. During the next several weeks, two Preservation Board members plan to meet with the Jackson Town Council to present a list of local historic buildings. They hope to start



Jackson Hole High School students Ben Bauman and Ian Curry measure the width of the Wort Hotel staircase, while Frances Hughes sketches its details and proportions. The three drafting students are helping to prepare a nomination that could add the hotel to the National Historic Register.

***"The (Worts) had the foresight that tourism would be the major industry here."***

— Joan Grever

TETON COUNTY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION BOARD

the process of making regulations.

To be recognized by the National Register, a building must be at least 50 years old and have some historical or architectural significance, Grever said.

In hopes of achieving that status the Wort will be put through a three-step process.

Kurt Dubbe, who is the President of the Historical Preservation Board, and Dennis will write a nomination that outlines the building's history and identifies its key

features. The Preservation Office will review the application and decide whether the Wort is historically significant and whether it has retained its integrity.

"If you took a hundred-year-old building that the mayor lived in while he was mayor of Jackson, then it would have historical significance," Dennis said. "But that doesn't mean it has historic integrity."

If a building is constructed or renovated from original materials and retains its appearance, then it has historic integrity, he said.

If the National Register committee grants the Wort historic status, a commemorative plaque will be placed on the front of the building.

Dennis, a former Preservation Office architect, believes the Wort has a good chance of making the National Register, even though parts of it were destroyed by a fire years ago and it was altered during its reconstruction.

"It does have quite a bit of local significance and quite a bit of integrity remaining," he said.

"It's kind of a balancing act," Dennis said. "If it has enough historical significance then it can have less integrity and still be [accepted]."

Some of the Wort's distinguishing features include a bar that is inlaid with silver dollars and the hotel's European alpine architectural style, Dennis said.

The building, which was designed by Lorenzo Grimmett and built in 1941 by the Wort family, played an important role in Jackson's history.

"The [family] had the foresight that tourism would be the major industry here," Grever said. "And they developed the Wort as a tourist destination."

The Worts were among Jackson's first settlers, moving here from Nebraska in 1893. Eventually they became respected business leaders and made significant contributions to the town's development, Grever said.

The Wort was the first luxury hotel in the valley and has since become a landmark.

formation and offered so much,

I just wanted to say Thank you for all your great efforts on behalf of historic preservation and your help +

3-11-98

Dear Carol -

Kurt told me you resigned from the CHS board which I was really sorry to hear. I am



3.25.98

# Preservationists want historic building laws

■ Teton County Historical Preservation Board approaches officials about the need for legislation.

By Melanie Harrice

The Teton County Historical Preservation Board will ask the Jackson and Teton County to adopt legislation to protect historic buildings from demolition and neglect.

Kurt Dubbe, an architect who is the president of the Historical Preservation Board, said the group will approach the Jackson Town Council and the Teton County commissioners. Some officials, such as Mayor Barney Oldfield and Teton County commissioner Mike Gierau, have shown a willingness to consider some type of legislation.

"We want to encourage the Town of Jackson and the county to implement appropriate historic preservation policy," Dubbe said. "Our long-term objective is to get some language in the town and county regulations."

Preservation Board member Joan Grever said most communities have some sort of legislation in place.

Without legislation, any historic building can be altered or razed regardless of its age and significance. Recognition by the National Register of Historic Places does not offer a building any protection. It is simply a form of recognition and does not affect an owner's right to change what he owns. Only local laws can guarantee that buildings are saved.

Dubbe would like to see a law put in place that requires demolition

permits for historic structures. That type of legislation would buy time for the Preservation Board to review structures targeted for demolition and prevent "reactionary" behavior, Dubbe said.

The board is working toward that goal by identifying historic buildings in the county. The group recently received a \$3,500 federal grant to survey all historic buildings inside town limits.

So far, Grever has identified 270 possible buildings that will be evaluated by a historian during the next year. He will determine which of the properties are eligible for the National Register.

**"Preservation tends to take a backseat if a seat at all."**

— Kurt Dubbe  
ARCHITECT

Many people believe that economy and preservation don't mix, but that is not always true, Dubbe said.

"I would encourage property owners that without infringing on their property rights that there are appropriate economic values in preservation," Dubbe said. "Preservation tends to take a backseat if a seat at all."

Building owners can be eligible for tax incentives and historical preservation grants.

Local landmarks such as Jedediah's, St. John's Episcopal Church and Rectory, and the Jackson Hole Playhouse remain vulnerable until protective laws are passed, Dubbe said.

## VIEWPOINTS

4-1-98



### Not funny

4-22-98

I have received numerous unfavorable comments concerning the enclosed cartoon published in your April 1 edition.

When I first saw it I hoped it was an April Fool's joke. But unfortunately, it wasn't. Everyone feels it a real put-down to the Board and it's so contrary to the News' strong support of preserving our heritage, particularly by Melanie's [Harrice] and Mark's [Huffman] fine articles through the years.

As a member of the Teton County Historical Preservation Board, I surely hope the cartoonist becomes educated to the many beneficial efforts the Board is doing for Jackson Hole, including the GTNP's historic buildings.

My sincere thanks for all your other positive support.

Joan M. Grever  
Jackson

The cartoon depicted a man showing off a shack and saying to a historic preservation board member "It's really historic. I decided to protest the draft in there. It was 1960! A long time ago." — Ed

# Jackson Hole Daily

## Industry leaders say tobacco deal is dead

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's major cigarette makers declared last summer's historic tobacco deal dead Wednesday, saying Congress has twisted their offer to help cut teen smoking into a harsh attack on their industry and American smokers.

Led by the head of No. 2 tobacco maker RJR Nabisco, the companies vowed to fight any effort in Congress to increase prices and fashion tougher restrictions on advertising.

But President Clinton and congressional leaders insisted they will press forward with efforts to pass a comprehensive law meant to curb

teen smoking and compensate states for treating sick smokers — with or without the industry's cooperation.

"They can be part of it or they can fight it," an angry Clinton said on his return from a trip to Chicago. "I think they ought to rethink their position because we're going to get this done one way or the other."

The companies had warned for weeks they would walk away. But on Wednesday, RJR chief executive Steven Goldstone said the process was "broken beyond repair."

"We have failed in our effort to achieve a comprehensive resolution of the contentious issues surrounding tobacco in our country," he told the National Press Club.

The leading proposals in Congress would raise cigarette prices too much, he said, without regard for adult smokers and businesses that depend on tobacco sales.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Goldstone's remarks show how worried the tobacco

*Continued on page 40*

## Preservation regs face battle

By Melanie Harrice  
Jackson Hole News

As a historic preservation group prepares a set of building regulations to bring before the town and county, many officials are wary of infringing on private

**LOCAL**

property rights. While the board does not know what type of regulations it will bring before officials, it wants to institute some type of protections that would delay or prevent buildings from being demolished.

While most officials say they are in favor of preserving historic buildings, many are afraid that across-the-board regulations would restrict someone's

*Continued on page 3*

### Preservation

*Continued from page 1*

ability to develop a piece of property. All officials polled said they wanted to see something in writing before they took a specific stand on the issue.

"I lean toward preserving our historical buildings," Mayor Barney Oldfield said. "I hate to see them torn down just to build another office building."

Like many local decision makers, Oldfield would prefer to protect them on a case-by-case basis.

He plans to raise the issue at an upcoming Joint Planning Board meeting.

Teton County commissioner Sandy Shuptrine wondered whether the issue should involve the town since councilors originally refused to jointly fund the Preservation Board. Instead they chose to leave it in the county's lap, Shuptrine said.

"Since [the town] did not want to participate in the beginning I don't know whether it should go to the Joint Planning Board," she said.

As for the proposed regulations, Shuptrine did not want to commit to a position until she saw the Preservation Board's proposal.

"I don't like shooting from the hip," she said.

Shuptrine is open to the idea of preserving buildings that have real

historic value.

"I do know that there are a lot of historic structures that have disappeared and I know that there is interest in the community to maintain these structures," she said. "I'm interested in that idea."

Commissioner Ann Stephenson liked the idea of historic regulations.

"If it's worked in other communities and seems to be fair and equitable and the most effective way to preserve these buildings then I would be in favor of looking at them," she said. "If they're good then I'd be in favor of them."

Commission chairman Bob Shervin also favored historic protection on a case-by-case basis but was against anything that restricted property owners.

Town councilman Mark Obringler favored preservation but only thought a handful of buildings would qualify.

"I can probably count on both hands the number of buildings that most people consider historical," he said.

Town councilman Chris Kirk was against forcing property owners to preserve buildings that are old and falling down.

"It's got to be based on some sort of rationality," he said.

Town councilor Scott Anderson did not think a historic district would work in Jackson and thought people tended to preserve buildings without being constrained by regulations.

Jackson Hol

# County appoints members to three volunteer boards

By Melanie Harrice

Teton County commissioners have appointed eight people to fill positions opening next month on the Transportation Board, Library Board and Historic Preservation Board.

Commissioners interviewed 15 candidates for seats on the boards and appointed the new members yesterday at their regular meeting.

Two seats on the Teton County Library Board, previously held by Larry Jorgenson and Lee Riddell, will be filled by Marilyn Stowell and Terri Kirkwood. The appointments are for three years. Five people applied for the positions; none were the incumbents.

The Transportation Board has one position opening up, with a 3½-year term. It will be vacated by Capt. Bob

Morris. Jay Varley, who was the only applicant for the job, will assume the seat July 1.

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board had five vacancies, three of which opened because members resigned.

Earlier this year Jamie Schoen and Carole Hofley stepped down, vacating seats that have terms that expire in 2000. The other three seats were held by Georgia Ligori, Kurt Dubbe and Robert Rudd, and each has a three-year term.

Nine people applied for the five openings. Commissioners appointed Jesse O'Connor, Tracy Hansen, Barry Dennis, Millie Yasrobi and Dubbe.

Rudd and Ligori did not apply for reappointment.

# Group buys visitor center

By Mark Huffman

The Grand Teton Natural History Association finished purchase this week of the visitor center building on North Cache, paying the Wyoming Department of Transportation \$800,000 for the structure.

Under the non-profit status of the association, a visitor center combining services of the Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce and all the local federal and state land and wildlife agencies will operate seven days a week.

"Everything will be in one location instead of people going to each of the agencies for services," said association executive director Sharlene Milligan. "We hope to have this available seven days a week, year round."

The location, on the north end of town on the route tourists take from Jackson to Grand Teton and Yellowstone national parks, is seen as ideal by the agencies involved.

The center will be staffed by

employees of the chamber and the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wyoming Department of Game and Fish.

Included in the center is a natural history association book store similar to the one it operates at the Park Services' visitor center in Moose. Milligan said the store also will sell other educational material and merchandise from the agencies involved, "anything that would help people understand about wildlife." It's planned that income from the book store will pay the mortgage for the building.

Also planned is a wildlife display designed by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, which plans to spend \$250,000 in the first three years of the center.

The natural history association's plan is to give the building to the National Elk Refuge when the mortgage is paid. The refuge, an agency of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, owns the land on which the 5,820-square-foot building sits

Jackson Hole Daily • Monday, June 1, 1998 3

# Eight seats open on three boards

By Melanie Harrice  
Jackson Hole News

Teton County Commissioners will interview 15 applicants for eight seats on three county board in coming weeks. They will vote in the new board members at one of their regular meetings before June 30 in order to fill the positions by July 1. Applications were due May 22.

The Teton County Library Board has two positions opening up, each with three-year terms. The seats are currently held by Larry Jorgenson and Lee Riddell. Five people have applied for the positions: Marilyn Stowell, Dawn Marousek, J. Gary Dennis, Terri A. Kirkwood and Carl Schreier.

The transportation board has one

three-and-a-half-year post opening up. The seat will be vacated by Bob Morris. John S. Varley is the only applicant.

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board has five vacancies, three of which are opening because of members resigning. Earlier this year Jamie Schoen and Carole Hofley stepped down, vacating seats with terms that expire in 2000. The other three seats are held by Georgia Ligori, Kurt Dubbe and Robert Rudd. Each has a three-year term.

Applying for the five openings are Millie Yasrobi, Don B. Martin, Jesse O'Connor, John S. Varley, Ronald E. Diener, Tracy Hansen, Barry Dennis, Kurt Dubbe and Alice E. Richter.



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June 30, 1999



NEWS FILE PHOTO

The landmark Wort Hotel in downtown Jackson has been nominated for the National Register for Historic Places.

# State nominates Wort for National Register

### Preservation office recognizes landmark Jackson hotel.

By Melanie Harrice

Jackson's Wort Hotel has been nominated by the state for inclusion in the National Register for Historic Places.

The State Historic Preservation Office has given its stamp of approval for the Wort to receive that coveted historic status. Now the final decision is up to the Keeper of the National Register for Historic Places.

The Wort appears to be a shoe-in, said Joan Grever, a member of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board.

"We don't have any hesitation at all that they'll accept it," Grever said. The Keeper "almost always" accepts nominations from state historic offices, she said.

The final decision will be made within six weeks.

Last year the Historic Preservation Board and students from Jackson Hole High School prepared an application and architectural survey for the Wort. The application was submitted to the state office and received approval approximately two weeks ago.

"The hotel is considered the heart of Jackson Hole because of all the activities that have occurred there," Grever said.

Located at the southeast corner of Broadway and Glenwood, the Wort

is one of the most important historic buildings in the valley and is a local landmark. It boasts late-19th and 20th Century Revival architecture and includes distinguishing features such as a bar inlaid with silver dollars.

Built in 1941 by the Wort family and overhauled after a fire in 1980, the building also played an important role in Jackson Hole history. The family had the foresight to realize tourism would be a major industry, so they developed the hotel as a tourist destination.

The Worts were among Jackson's first settlers, moving here from Nebraska in 1893. Eventually they became respected business leaders and made significant contributions to the town's socio-economic development.

"The board feels strongly that those early pioneer families who made this community what it is should be recognized and honored," Grever said.

The National Register is an official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures and objects that played an important role in the nation's historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological development. To be recognized, a building must be at least 50 years old and have some historical or architectural significance.

Recognition by the National Register of Historic Places does not protect buildings from being altered, razed or redeveloped. Only local laws can guarantee that buildings are saved. Teton County and Jackson have yet to pass such protective legislation.

**Voice Your Opinion or Offer Comment**  
on the  
**5 Mormon Row Historic District Management Plans**  
issued by  
**Grand Teton National Park**

Pick up a copy of the PLANS at GTNP VISITOR CENTER in Moose or pick up a SYNOPSIS of the plans at GEORGIA JILL'S ANTIQUES at 115 E. Broadway.  
(A full copy of the plans are also available for your review at Jill's)  
This notice provided by the TETON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD 732-3266

## Mormon row 8-11-99

We are the daughter (Inez Jacobson) and granddaughter (Judy Crandall) of Ida and Andy Chambers, who were early homesteaders on Mormon Row. We have recently read the document prepared by the Grand Teton National Park concerning the restoration and preservation of Mormon Row (Mormon Row Historic District — Management Alternatives and Environmental Assessment). In addition to a wonderful section on the history of Mormon Row and a description of cultural and natural resources, it also describes several proposed alternative plans concerning restoration and preservation of the area.

Homesteading was critical to the settlement and economic development of the West and Mormon Row (what is left of it) provides a small window into a part of the history of that way of life. Remembering the pioneers who settled Mormon Row and learning something about them not only increases the enjoyment visitors take from seeing the park, but acknowledges the importance of the homesteaders' work and their contributions to the fabric of American life. Because of this, we definitely encourage the park to implement a plan that includes some restoration and preservation of the existing buildings, particularly on the John Moulton and Andy Chambers sites; however, we hope that any changes will retain the pioneer character of Mormon Row and will be as unobtrusive as possible and compatible with the time and place.

We encourage your readers to obtain a copy of the document and make their views known to the Park Service.

Inez Jacobson  
Judy Crandall

## SOS 8-11-99

The News received the following letter to the Teton County Board of Education of:

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board strongly endorses the plans of the Wilson Save Our School House committee to preserve the historic four-room portion of the second schoolhouse in Wilson. This nearly 70-year-old log Little Red Schoolhouse was built in 1931 and has not only served as an important education center in Teton County, but has also been the unofficial heart of the Wilson community for decades.

It is our board's understanding that this site will be transferred by deed from you to Teton County in the

near future. It is also our understanding that the Teton County commission is in full agreement of seeing this significant historic building preserved. Additionally, our board has been advised that your school board intends to issue a contract immediately to either totally demolish the entire school structure or to only demolish that large portion of the structure that is not historic, thus preserving the Wilson four-room Little Red Schoolhouse.

Our board supports the Little Red Schoolhouse so it can continue to serve as a much-needed family community center in the oldest settlement in Teton County. This building is a most important physical link to our past. As you know, elementary schools hold a very special place in people's hearts. Your action to help preserve the visual heritage of our community will enable the local history to be taught much more meaningfully to your students.

Millic Yasrobi, president  
Teton County Historic  
Preservation Board

Sept. 15  
1999



NEWS PHOTO/RAQUEL ODELL

With the help of Fred Chapman from the State Historic Preservation office, Cree O'Connell, a ninth-grader at Western Wyoming High School, bevels a post that will support the roof over the Lucas cabin deck.

## Volunteers laboring to save Lucas cabin

■ The government she abhorred is preserving a pioneer's legacy.

By Rachel Odell

In 1910, Geraldine Lucas left her teaching job in New York City, came to Jackson Hole, and homesteaded nearly 400 acres in what is now Grand Teton National Park.

She was 58-years-old, single, and she hated the federal government.

Now, 89 years later, the U.S. Department of the Interior owns her property, and the government which she despised is working hard to keep her cabin and outbuildings near Jenny Lake intact.

For several weeks in August and September, volunteer crews have worked in shifts to restore Lucas's weather-beaten cabin. Workers have come from Western Wyoming High School in Jackson, from the University of Wyoming, the University of Montana, the State Historic Preservation office and elsewhere.

The crews tore off the old porches, replaced rotten panels on the roof, and drained water between the foundation and the logs. The restoration was made possible by a \$20,000 National Park Service grant secured by park cultural resources director Mike Johnson.

"We don't know what we're going to do with the cabin once it is restored, but we thought it was important to preserve her home and maintain Geraldine's legacy," Johnson said.

Lucas was a pioneer.

She was the first valley woman to climb the Grand and spent winters isolated at her cabin near Lupine Meadows, getting around with her sled dogs. Her memorial is bolted to a boulder at the base of Burnt Wagon Gulch.

Today, skiers who tour to Jenny Lake find it hard to resist a rest on the cabin porch.

After Lucas' death, her son sold the homestead to a buyer who resold it to the Snake River Land Co. That enterprise was the Rockefeller-

Continued next page

## Restoration

Continued from page 35A

backed company that donated land on the valley floor to make a significant addition to Grand Teton National Park.

The Lucas cabin also is known as the Fabian cabin after its second owners, Harold and Josephine.

Today, the options for the property include turning it into an artist's studio and offering residencies through the park. It could also be used for housing for volunteers, Johnson said.

For some of the workers, the cabin's final use is not important. In restoring the building they want to put their math skills to work, to immerse themselves in the natural environment, and to learn practical carpentry, said Terry Roice. He is the principal of Western Wyoming High School, an alternative high school that teaches grades 9 through 12.

"We like to get the kids involved with projects with real purpose," Roice said. "This way we put something back into the community and the kids have the opportunity to apply some skills and work together as a team."

Each year the alternative high school chooses a broad theme under which all of the subjects are taught. This year's theme is the environment, which is one reason restoring Geraldine's cabin is significant,

*"We like to get the kids involved with projects with real purpose."*

— Terry Roice  
PRINCIPAL, WWHS

Roice said.

"We're asking each kid to go off on their own for a half an hour and just sit in nature and think about what it means," he said.

That meditation combined with hard work helps the students to "internalize what they do a lot better," he said. "They'll remember this for the rest of their lives, but they might forget what they read in the history book next week."

Ninth grader Cree O'Connell said he will do more than remember the community service project.

"I am seriously considering restoration as my career," O'Connell said.

"I like being able to be creative and using my hands. I thought it would be boring, but this is so much fun."

O'Connell spent the day peeling logs and beveling them to fit as beams under the porch. Before working on the Lucas cabin, O'Connell had never squared a log before.

Her job entailed precise measuring, then arduous chipping to ensure square corners and flat surfaces.

Helping peel logs was Brenda Carmichael, a junior. She also hammered in part of the roof, a task she eagerly accepted.

"I learned how to roof from my grandfather," she said Thursday, shielding her eyes from the bright sun. "I love getting up on the roof. I had to figure out how to space the boards."

About 20 students from Western Wyoming worked on the project from labor day through Friday.

O'Connell said he learned more than just how to restore an old building.

"This is my history," he said.

"I was born and raised in Jackson and I think it is so cool that people took so much time to come out here and build a house."



NEWS PHOTO/JOHN BRECHER

Camera operator Robert Case of Cinetel Studios films the old Lundy home in Wilson on Monday for part of Bob Vila's *Restore America* show.

# America Restored

■ Bob Vila recognizes the work done to save the historic Lundy home in Wilson.

By Melanie Harrice

When John Mortensen and his wife Pam bought a rundown house belonging to one of Wilson's first families — they never dreamed it'd be featured on Bob Vila's *Restore America* show.

So when the Mortensen's received a phone call from Scripps Productions asking to film a segment of the show at their home, they were thrilled. "People are so happy we preserved part of what once was here because, particularly in Wilson, there's so little left," John Mortensen said.

*Restore America* — which airs on Home & Garden Television every Sunday at 8 p.m. Mountain Standard Time — features segments on restored houses from all 50 states. The Wyoming episode will air in the first quarter of 2000, said Karen Meissner, the show's western states segment producer.

The Wyoming segment includes restoration projects in four towns — Buffalo, Douglas, Rawlins and Wilson. *Restore America* producers chose the Mortensen home in Wilson because the restoration is "remarkable" and the house "fulfills viewers expectations of what the best of Wyoming would be," Meissner said. "We're always looking for something that stands out and I think the Mortensen house stood out."

The house also was chosen because of its historic significance. Originally the home belonged to the Lundy family that settled in Wilson at the turn of the century. Robert Carson Lundy, Sr. built the house in 1913 just after he moved here. Lundy was one of the area's early entrepreneurs, opening a general store across the street, a gas station and a lumber mill.

Lundy built the wood frame house with lumber from his mill.

During his lifetime, Lundy served two terms in the Wyoming Legislature. After he died, the home remained in the Lundy family until the Mortensens bought the house in 1987.

Some of that history will be showcased in *Restore America*.

Field producer Randall Shuptrine and his crew shot footage of old photos from the Jackson Hole Historical Society. The photos will run in the beginning of the segment to underscore hardships faced by early settlers.

"People really have to have an understanding about the past before they really care about a restoration," Shuptrine said. He plans to show viewers an old photo of Lundy astride a horse in front of his newly-built home which will dissolve into a present day shot of the front of the home, connecting the past with the present.

"So you can see how it's changed very little," he said.

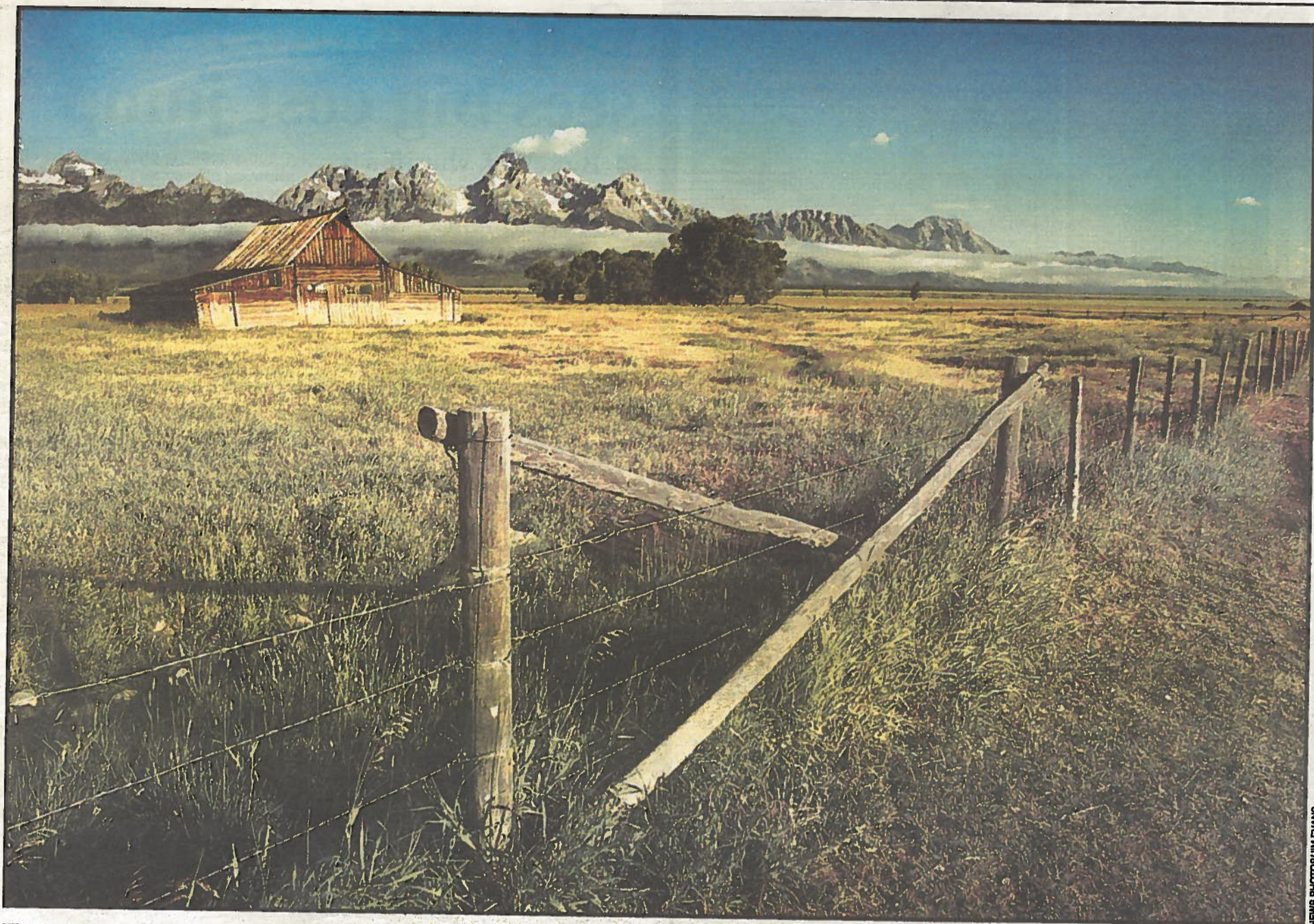
The show also will feature footage of the inside and outside of the home, depicting its poor condition prior to being restored, as well as interviews with the Mortensens.

When the two bought the house it was in terrible condition.

"When we first bought the house someone from the fire department offered to do a controlled burn on the home," Mortensen said with a chuckle. "He's been over here many times and said, I'm sure glad you didn't take our advice."



9.2000



The fate of Mormon Row and the Moulton Barn is being studied by the National Park Service.

## Does the park's past have a future?

■ Grand Teton National Park wants opinion on how and whether it should preserve Mormon Row.

By Rachel Odell

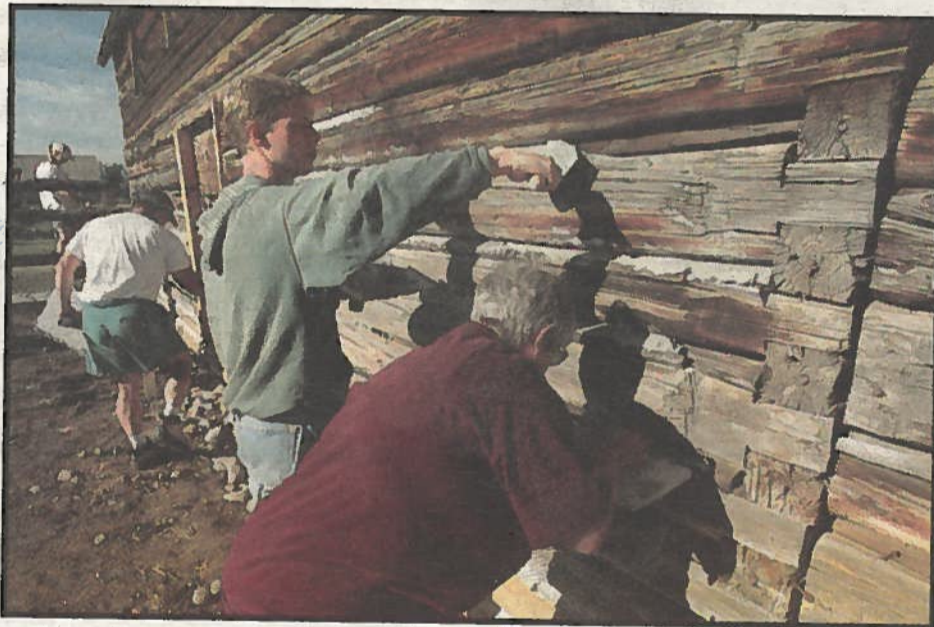
It was once the heartbeat of the valley, the genesis of the community of Jackson Hole. Today, Mormon Row sits abandoned to the elements, fading into history as the barns and homes of a once-proud settlement crumble.

Managers at Grand Teton National Park were once content to ignore Mormon Row, allowing the vestiges of pioneer life to slowly disappear. Now there is recognition that the historic homesteaders' buildings might deserve protection.

"Most of the homesteads in that site were purchased to return the land to a more natural state," said Mike Johnson, director of cultural resources at the park. Changing times have resulted in changed attitudes, and now the Park Service recognizes the history that lives on in the buildings. "In terms of its historic significance, there is quite a lot," Johnson said.

The Park Service has written a study that examines several alternatives for the future of the settlement, one of which it could adopt to manage Mormon Row. Until Sept. 13 people have a chance to say how and whether the six historic homesteads should be preserved.

Located east of Highway 89 on the east side of Blacktail Butte, Mormon Row is a place where "time and the harsh climate have taken an extreme toll," the study says. "Most structures that remain stand abandoned and in need of stabiliza-



A group of volunteers trying to preserve the buildings on Mormon Row chink a barn, helping keep water out. Connie Doyle, Sheehan Gallagher and M.L. King are all from Michigan.

tion. No information information about the area is provided on-site, and most visitors probably do not even know that the historic area is within the boundaries of Grand Teton National Park."

Still, some people continue to visit Mormon Row, the document says. In trying to reach a decision, the park has drafted five alternatives for the site. The first would remove some of the historic buildings while stabilizing others. A turnaround for cars would be built north of Ditch Creek Bridge, and the landscape would be allowed to "revert to a more natural pre-settlement condition." Costs for that plan are estimated to be about \$304,855.

The second alternative calls for stabilizing all the historic structures on Mormon Row, building visitor pullouts along the road, and building a parking area at the intersection of the Antelope Flats

and Mormon Row roads. That would cost about \$344,400.

A third alternative would stabilize all the historic buildings and maintain the cottonwood trees and other ornamental vegetation that the homesteaders grew. Two parking pullouts and a vehicle turnaround would be built. The park would also publish a self-guided tour brochure. That would cost about \$868,100.

The fourth alternative is similar to the third but calls for building a five-car parking lot near the John Moulton homestead. A second parking area with a large vehicle turnaround would be built near a swimming hole. Mormon Row Road would be modified to direct visitors to the parking area. That plan would cost about \$924,500.

The final plan would stabilize all the buildings, restore some building interiors, and preserve cottonwood

trees and ornamental plantings. Two parking lots would be developed, and the Ditch Creek Bridge would be repaired to provide access for walkers, bikers and drivers. That would cause the southern part of the Mormon Row Road to be widened and improved with a gravel surface. That alternative is estimated to cost about \$2.2 million.

Grand Teton National Park bought most of the homesteads on Mormon Row when the park expanded in 1950. At least parts of Mormon Row should be restored because of its historical significance, said Franz Camenzind, the executive director of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance.

"I think it is a worthy effort to protect some of that cultural history, and I think it can become a real good, low-key, historic interpretative site," Camenzind said.

One critic of the plans said the park should use Mormon Row restoration to increase the services in the area. Before spending a lot of money to stabilize Mormon Row, the park should improve Antelope Flats Road, said John Knopp, who lives on the east side of Grand Teton park.

"I always surmise that the east side of the park was more like a step-child," Knopp wrote. "It gets a lot less than the favorite daughter, the west side. This is true of new roads, road repairs, snow removal priority, building maintenance, new construction of offices, storage, shops and other facilities. I recognize the need to concentrate more in the high usage areas, but even a step-child needs shoes."

Instead of the existing alternatives, the park should maintain Antelope Flats year-round, assess visitor use at Mormon Row, and then, if more people come to the area, make repairs and renovations at the area, he said.

# LETTERS

## Smoke signal

Did anyone notice that the Tetons were hidden behind smoke Saturday?

Visibility was in the double digit range and breathing was a chore. This was caused by fires in the Arco Desert. A check of the map will show the smoke had to blow directly over the INEEL site to get here. Maybe someone should have taken a photo and sent it to the state of Idaho along with a definition of the word "downwind."

Tim Sandlin  
Jackson  
angst@blissnet.com

9-29-99

## Historic loss

Sadly, another part of Jackson's important heritage was destroyed by a bulldozer two weeks ago. The well-preserved 62-year-old log home of local author Fern Nelson and her husband, Albert, a noted builder, no longer stands on North Center Street. The historic building had been adapted in recent years for use by several of our favorite restaurants. Albert Nelson and his brother were fine craftsmen and built many buildings, including the famous Berol Lodge at the AMK Ranch.

Our community needs to establish a demolition procedure that will allow for a short review period

before our historic buildings are demolished. In fact, it is very likely that some residents would have been interested in owning and moving the Nelson building had they known it was going to be demolished. Let's save our well-maintained old buildings by recycling them instead of bulldozing them. Otherwise, Jackson Hole will lose its identity as the "Last of the Old West" as stated on our "Howdy Stranger" sign at the top of Teton Pass.

Jill Sheppard  
Owner, Georgia Jill's Antiques

## Crucial decision

I hope everyone in the valley is aware of the crucial decision about to be made on the other side of the Tetons — whether or not to grant Grand Targhee corporation a private enclave (= haven for real estate development). I wrote Forest Supervisor Reese as follows:

"It's not over yet. The issue: Allow free market and privatization philosophies to dominate our children's lives, or not. I'm on the side of not. People like you are in crucial positions; you can make a difference. I'm well aware of the pressures you face, but a firm stand, keeping the base of Grand Targhee as federal (i.e. public) land can be one of those vital little turning points. Best wishes."

Martin Murie  
sagehen@slc.com

Continued on page 17A

# Old buildings honored

9-20-00

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board is honoring 10 old buildings in a ceremony Thursday, Sept. 28, in the Commissioner's Chambers at the Teton County Building.

"We hope to target 10 buildings a year, all over 50 years old," said Dr. Alice Eve Richter, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee of TCHPB.

The buildings that will be honored in the ceremony include the Wort Hotel, the Gill House, the Clubhouse, the old Teton County Library building, Si Ferrin House, Spicer Garage (Jackson Hole Playhouse), the Kudar Motel, the

old Wilson School, the Van Vleck House (Jedediah's), and the Teton Theater.

Richter said that the buildings should be recognized for their role in Jackson Hole history.

"The building in back of the Kudar Motel is over 100 years old," Richter said. "The trees there are over 13 feet in circumference. I think the Kudar is the oldest business in town that is owned and operated by its original owners."

"All 10 buildings will receive indoor plaques, said Richter. Next Thursday's ceremony will take place at 1 p.m.

Ed Bushnell

4B - JACKSON HOLE NEWS, Wednesday, September 27, 2000

# 10 historic buildings to be honored Thursday

■ Kudar Motel, Teton Theatre and others to receive plaques.

Kristan Clarke

Ten of the approximately 64 historic buildings and sites recently inventoried in Teton County will receive plaques for remaining viable structures within the community for 50 or more years.

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board, founded in 1996, strives to educate the community about its numerous historical and cultural resources in an attempt to preserve them for future generations.

The Plaque Program, the board's most recent effort, will kick off with an awards and recognition ceremony at 1 p.m. Thursday in the commissioners' chambers at 200 S. Willow. The public is invited to attend the event. The board hopes to make it an annual occurrence.

Among the buildings being honored is the Kudar Motel. Started in 1938 by Joe and Max Kudar and the Nelson brothers, it is the oldest business in town still run by its original owners. It also boasts one of the largest trees in town, a poplar with a 13-foot circumference.

The Old Wilson School was opened for grades one through eight in the fall of 1931 by Jim Gardner and Wesley Bircher. Students were spoiled by Maude and Gertrude Bircher, who baked fresh bread each day for them and often served elk roasts.

What is now the Jackson Hole Playhouse has also served as a Ford agency, a gun shop, a freight station, bus depot, bowling alley and home for three live theater companies. Through all of this it has kept its historical structural integrity intact.

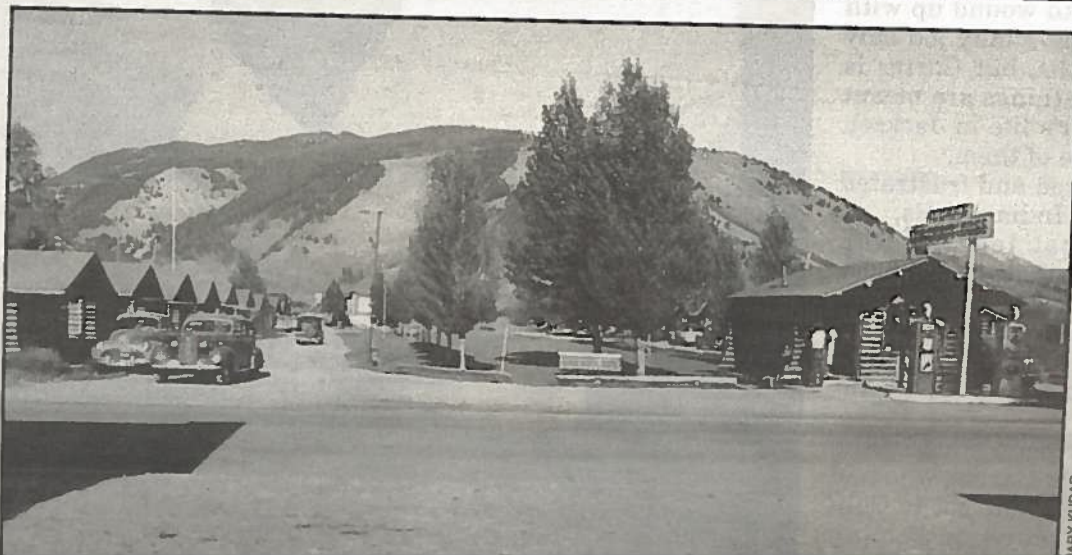
The Teton Theatre — built in 1941 of volcanic rock from Victor, Idaho, by Bruce Porter — is still serving its original purpose of bringing movies to the Jackson public.

The Wort Hotel, the Club House, the Old Teton County Library, the Van Vleck House, the Si Ferrin House and the Gill House are the other six buildings that will receive plaques at Thursday's ceremony.

The historic preservation board's future plans include a series of brochures for self-guided historical tours. The first one will be of Spring Gulch and should be available by next summer. The board also hopes to develop legislation to be supported and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners to assist in preserving the relatively few remaining historic buildings in the county. The legislation will be based on plans already



NEWS PHOTO/JOHN BRECHER



Above, Mary Kudar stands in front of the historic Kudar Motel, which opened in 1938 and which will be honored with a plaque from the Teton County Historic Preservation Board on Thursday. She planted the trees which stand behind her.



# Old barn nominated for National Registry

■ The Miller Barn, built around 1898, is still in use by National Elk Refuge.

By Richard Anderson

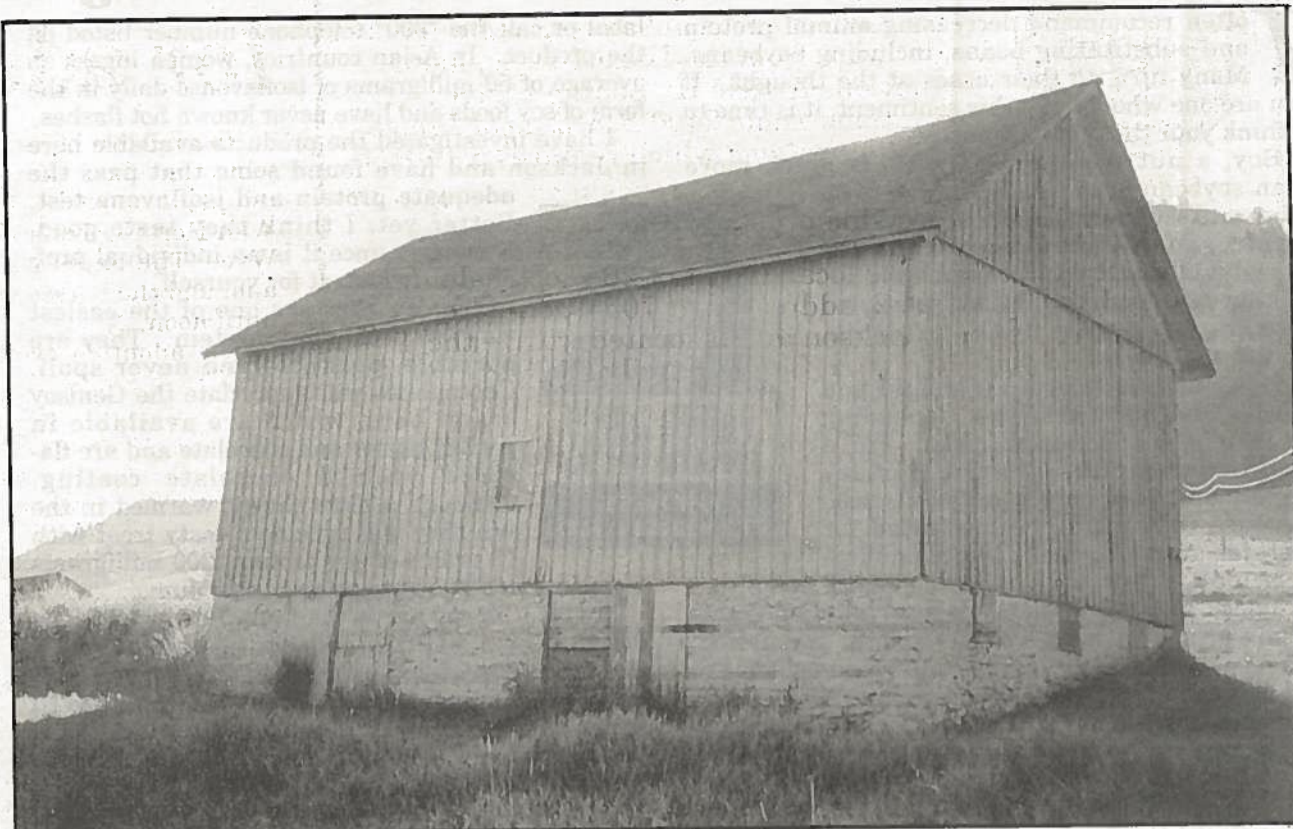
It might not look like much from the side of the Elk Refuge Road, but the beige, weathered barn about 200 feet northeast of the historic Miller Homestead is a national treasure.

That's the opinion of the National Elk Refuge and Jackson Hole Historical Museum and Society. And they hope that will be the opinion of the National Registry of Historic Places, to which they have sent an application for the barn's listing.

The 40-by-30-foot structure dates back to the same era as the Miller Homestead, which was built between 1895 and 1898 by Robert and Grace G. Miller. The Millers were a ranching family, and the barn served typical ranching purposes — housing horses and serving as storage — according to historical researcher Michael Cassity, hired by the refuge to research, write and file the barn's application to the National Registry.

Cassity notes that the Millers became pillars of the Jackson Hole community. They hosted the election of 1902 in their buildings, their home serving as a temporary post office, and it became the core of the cluster of homesteads near the convergence of Flat Creek and Cache Creek. Their cattle herd was the largest in the valley, making them the valley's wealthiest citizens. Robert was the first president of the Jackson State Bank, and in 1920, Grace Miller was elected mayor of Jackson.

In 1902, Robert Miller was named supervisor of the Teton District of the newly formed Yellowstone Forest Preserve. He performed his duties out of a cabin on the homestead that became known as the "first Forest Service office," according to Cassity. In 1914, the United States government purchased 1,240 acres from the Millers, including the buildings and barn. Robert and Grace moved to town, and their home became the first headquarters of the National Elk Refuge, serving as such for about 30 years.



The Miller Barn's sturdy foundation is best viewed from the west.

By the early '60s, the house was only sporadically inhabited. It was scheduled to be razed in 1967, but the Teton County Historical Society jumped to protect it. In 1969, the Miller House and Forest Reserve Cabin were listed on the National Registry. The barn, however, which had remained in use throughout all this time, was not included in that listing. Refuge officials and Cassity suggest this was merely an oversight. Now, however, as the refuge is considering constructing a new shop building, manager Barry Reiswig said it's important to look at preserving the barn forever, to ensure it will not be affected by this or any other future construction projects.

Reiswig speaks of the barn with admiration, calling it "unique" and "part of the history of the valley." Constructed entirely of local materials,

including field stones and some timbers possibly recycled from an old horse thief's cabin, it contains many wooden pegs and an expertly crafted stone foundation. The structure is still solid and stable. The west side of the barn, unseen from the road, contains entrances to a basement that still contains old stalls and other interior structures, presumably original.

"It ought to be protected," Reiswig said. "That stone work is neat, and all those wooden pegs ... it's a neat part of the history of the valley."

The application for listing will be sent to the Wyoming Office of Historic Preservation for approval, and then on to the National Registry of Historic Places. Reiswig predicted it would easily make the list, since it has the same historic values as the rest of the homestead.

# Square, old library nominated for history

■ The Teton County Preservation Board tries to list Jackson landmarks.

By James Fernald

The Teton County Preservation Board and a historian are working to establish the Jackson Town Square, the former Teton County Library building on Hansen Street and the American Legion building on North Cache as historic places.

Michael Cassity, a historian from Oklahoma, has been hired to study the history of the local places and prove their worth for the National Register of Historic Places. Cassity, a former history professor at the universities of Wyoming, Kansas, Missouri and Georgia, believes these nominations are essential to Jackson.

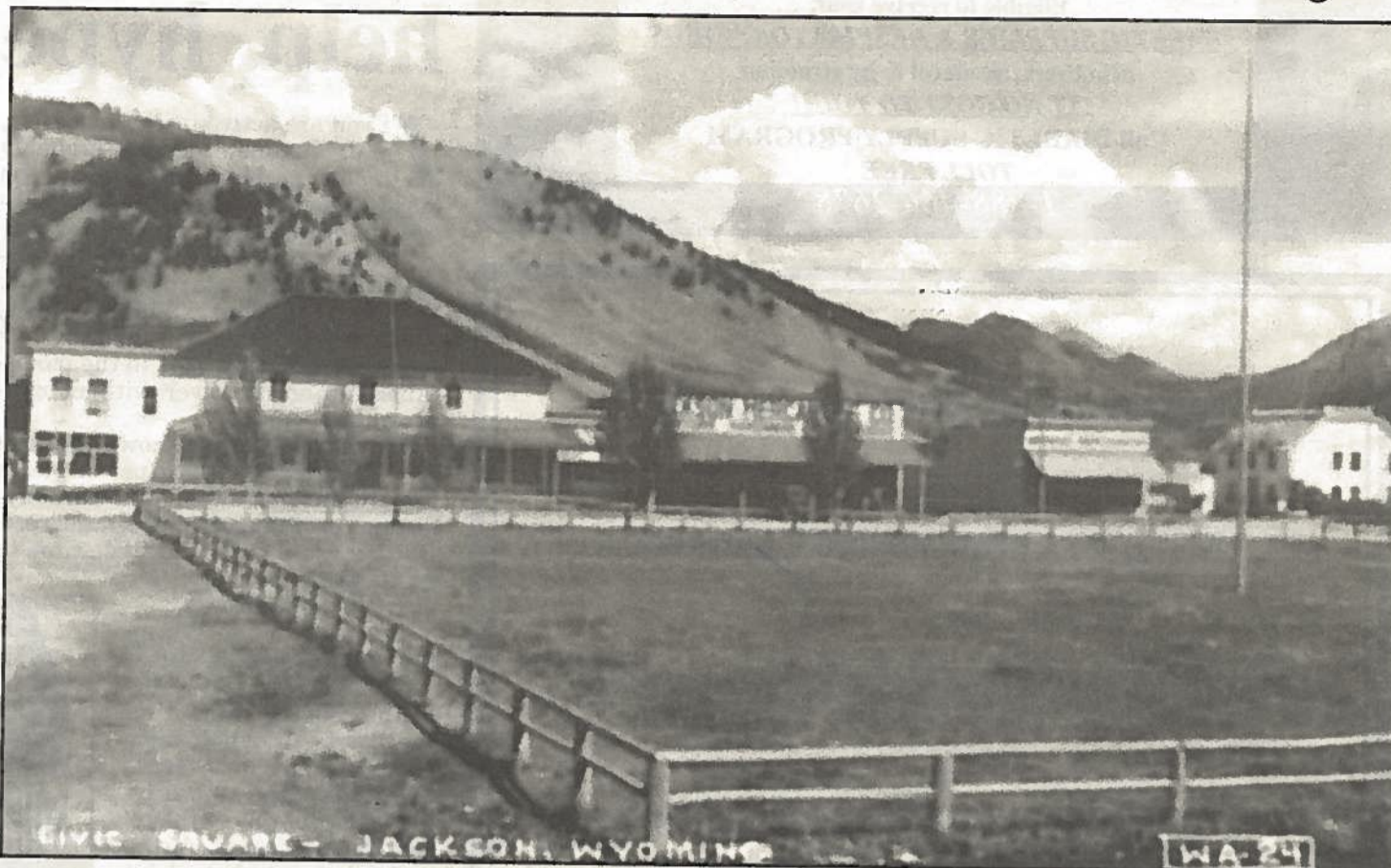
"Jackson is so rich with historic resources," Cassity said. "The Town Square deserves broader recognition than it receives. Most see it as a convenient, pretty place and they're not aware of how important and how much history lies behind it. There is a definite need to acknowledge, recognize and preserve these historic treasures."

Cassity began surveying the locations in 1998 and hopes to finish the nomination forms by late winter. After Cassity sends in the nominations to the National Register, which is administered by the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., various boards will peruse the forms. It takes at least a year for the nominations to go through the agencies.

"It's a stringent review process," Cassity said. "It's not just a matter of filling in papers."

## Building material dump

Town Square has a long history in Jackson, which helped draw the attention of the preservation board. In 1912, the Town Square, or "Frontier Park," became part of the town as a three-block donation designated for public use. The Town Square was initially used for dumping or storing building materials, but in 1932, in commemoration of



Jackson's Town Square, as shown here in the early days of its existence, will soon be nominated for historic status.

Washington's 200th birthday, it was improved. Jackson residents beautified the park and renamed it Washington Park. In the 1950s the Jackson Hole Rotary Club built an arch out of antlers, and a decade later three others were erected and have since been a trademark.

"Not a moment goes by when a group of tourists isn't taking pictures there," said Robert Righter, historian and member of the Preservation Board. "I can't think of any other place in town known by everyone."

The Teton County Library also has a long and interesting history. It opened up to the public in 1934 at Saint John's Episcopal Church, then it moved to a wing of the American Legion building and finally to Hansen Street in 1938. In 1997 the library moved to a new location, but the original building still stands and houses several local nonprofit organizations and the law library of the Teton

County Bar Association.

Cassity also hopes to submit a nomination for the American Legion to become part of the national register. He has invested most of his time in the square and library, but hopes to complete a nomination for the American Legion about the same time as the others.

"My hope is to get these nominations completed as soon as possible," Cassity said. "I think all three properties will be placed on the register. I'm confident because of the history I'm aware of. They've played an important role in the development of the community."

## Community pride

Righter said he believed if the nominations were accepted people would have more respect for these places.

"It's mainly to foster pride in the community," Righter said. "Jackson has lost much of its history. It's hard to restore property because of the rise of

property values. It's hard to save old buildings, but it's important to do so."

Jesse O'Connor, the President of the Preservation Board, says the board always tries to promote preserving such resources.

"We hope to educate people to invest in the future; the intangible," O'Connor said. "Something that won't pay off immediately, but future generations will value. We wish to applaud the town fathers who valued the rich green patch in the square enough to hold on to it and preserve it."

Cassity is glad to have support beyond the board and into the Jackson community.

"Many people are deeply interested and prepared to devote time and energy to make this work," Cassity said. "It's examples of people coming together for the betterment of the community that led to the completion of these integral parts of the town."

PHOTO COURTESY JACKSON HOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Jackson sites nominated for historic landmarks

While many people lament the changes that time and a growing population have brought to the Town of Jackson and Teton County, some members of the community are working to preserve the best of Jackson Hole's cultural sites and historic buildings.

In this spirit, two of Jackson's historic landmarks are in the process of being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places: the Jackson Town Square, officially named Washington Park, and the former Teton County Library Building on Hansen Street in East Jackson.

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board recently received a \$3,000 matching grant from the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office to prepare the nominations. The board has hired historian Michael Cassity, Ph.D., to research the sites and make the case for their significance. Cassity will forward the nominations to the National Register, which is administered by the National Park Service in Washington, D.C.

The preservation board decided to nominate the two sites after Cassity deemed them both eligible for the National Register. Jesse O'Connor, president of the board, said the group decided to nominate the town square because town squares are rare in this part of the country. The board also wanted to commemorate the forward-looking, civic-minded residents who set aside the space.

The library, O'Connor said, "is a beautiful building that was in danger of going away." The board wanted to encourage the county to preserve the structure.

The Jackson Town Square became a part of the town in 1912 as part of a donation of approximately three square blocks "for public use." Frontier Park was initially an unkept eyesore, used for dumping and storing building materials or corraling a horse.

In 1932, on the occasion of George Washington's 200th birthday, every state

established a committee to commemorate the event. Wyoming's committee encouraged park building and in Jackson, locals decided to beautify Frontier Park and rename it in honor of the nation's first president.

Marion Buchenroth served as chair of the committee and Olaus Murie served as publicity chair. The park beautification attracted the support and help of many groups as well as individuals, making it truly a community project.

Washington Park was officially dedicated in 1933. In the 1950s, the Rotary Club of Jackson Hole built an arch out of elk antlers on a corner of the square. The arch soon became a trademark, with many tourists posing in front of it. Consequently, in the late 1960s, Rotary erected identical arches on each of the remaining three corners of the square.

The Teton County Library was also a community project. In 1938, the Works Project Administration, a New Deal era agency, provided a grant of \$7,072 for labor costs to begin construction of the library building on Hansen Street.

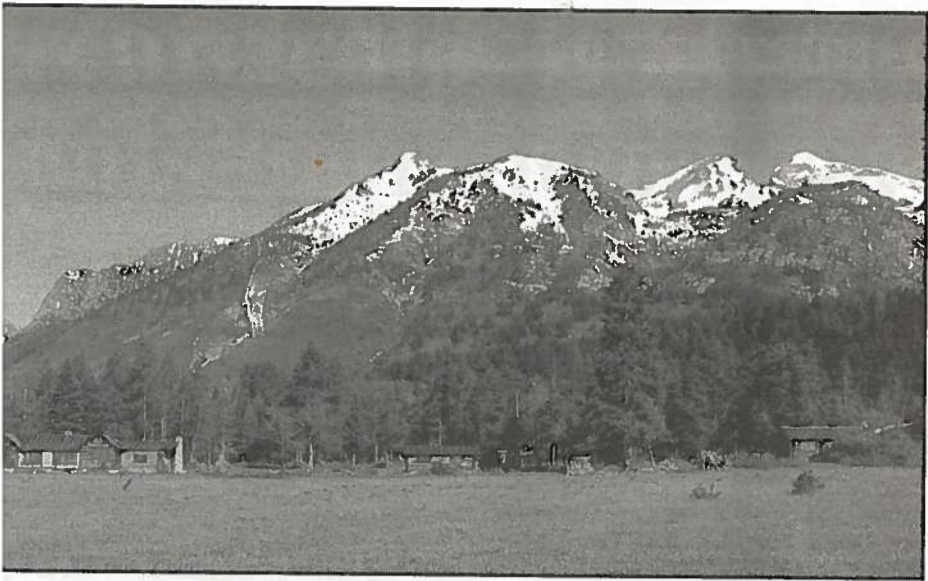
Sam Woodring, then superintendent of Grand Teton National Park, donated the logs and Paul Colbron, a New York architect who vacationed in Jackson Hole, designed the building for free.

Dedicated in 1940 as the Dr. Charles W. Huff Memorial Library, in honor of Jackson's first doctor and contributor to many civic enterprises, the building housed the library for 57 years. In 1997, the Teton County Library moved to a new building on the west side of town. The original library building is currently used as office space for several local nonprofit organizations as well as the Teton County Bar Association's law library.

Among the Teton County properties currently listed on the National Register are Flat Creek Ranch, Mormon Row Historic District in Grand Teton National Park, the Wort Hotel and Jedediah's.



April 7, 2004



NEWSGUIDE FILE PHOTO

White Grass Ranch, located at the mouth of Death Canyon near Phelps Lake in Grand Teton National Park, will become a preservation training center.

## Former dudes cheer plan for White Grass

Critics say decaying ranch in Grand Teton could be left to the elk.

By Rebecca Huntington

Former dudes, historians and local elders are enthused by Grand Teton National Park's plan to preserve the White Grass Ranch by turning it into a preservation training center.

Jackson resident Louise Wade called spending summers at the family's third-oldest dude ranch situated at the mouth of Death Canyon near Phelps Lake before it ceased operations in 1985.

"I brought my sons there year after year never dreaming that one day it

would go to rack and ruin as is its state now," Wade wrote in comments to the National Park Service.

Wade lauded the Park Service's plans to restore the ranch and turn it into a training and technology center where federal employees, students, volunteers and others may learn how to restore historic Western buildings.

Wade's comments were among 17 letters received by the Park Service during a public comment period, which closed March 21. Most of the comments favored the project as the best way to save an important cultural resource.

Though excited about saving the buildings, Wade echoed concerns of other former dudes that the ranch be preserved as a historic site open to

See **DUDES CHEER** on 13A

### DUDES CHEER

Continued from 12A

visitors — not just a training center.

Wade offered to contribute photos of Sunday night cookouts, pack trips, life by the pond and horse drives to help capture the ranch's history.

"The emphasis should be on preserving what a dude ranch is with horses to ride and memorabilia from the good old days," Wade wrote.

Wilson resident Bryan Tarantola first visited White Grass with his grandparents in the 1960s. Like Wade, Tarantola urged the Park Service to preserve the ranch's history by leaving the original building layout and putting any new buildings out of sight.

Historians Robert Righter and Sherry Smith also lauded the project.

"The park needs to save, use and interpret its cultural resources," they wrote in a joint letter. "In the past, park officials have neglected cultural resources, and a 'no action' alternative would simply be a continuation of flawed past policies."

#### Minimize disturbance

Other citizens wrote in to suggest incorporating environmentally-friendly building techniques and to involve local builders and the community in learning preservation.

Wade and others asked the Park Service to minimize disturbance to the surrounding landscape as much as possible by minimizing road and utility upgrades.

Other citizens were less pleased with the proposal. One resident wrote that with human residents gone, the ranch had become a haven for elk.

"I think a big increase in activity would cause the elk to move away or at least become uneasy in their environment," wrote Wilson resident Dan Mortensen. "It also makes no sense whatsoever to spend millions on buildings that have been rotting for the past 19 years and were actually neglected for many years before that by the White Grass Ranch."

The project could cost between \$1 million and \$4 million, depending on which alternative is selected. Built in 1913, the ranch has 11 cabins, a lodge and a service and laundry building.

Jackson resident Robert Strawbridge also panned the proposal.

"I thought the reason for buying the White Grass was to increase pristine open space," he wrote. "There are other ruined buildings outside or near the edge of the park to practice on."

#### 'A thousand cuts'

Strawbridge pointed out that Laurence Rockefeller is restoring the nearby JY Ranch to a more pristine state by removing buildings before donating the ranch to Grand Teton.

Conservation groups, meanwhile, worried about cumulative impacts of several small projects, such as White Grass. The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance warned that "the park is facing death by a thousand cuts with its piecemealed approach."

The Alliance suggested temporarily halting a slate of developments proposed inside the park, including White Grass, the McCollister residence, the Hunter barn, the Lucas-Fabian residence and a Spring Gulch housing project.

The Park Service should first rewrite its master plan and do an environmental analysis disclosing the cumulative impacts of all those new proposals before moving ahead with individual projects, the Alliance wrote.

Moreover, the National Parks Conservation Association wrote that decisions are being made without meaningful public input.

"NPCA is concerned with what we are increasingly seeing as a pattern of 'cart before the horse' planning, where decisions are made, and then justified," wrote NPCA representative Tim Young.

# Park restoration plan needs proper balance

Grand Teton National Park's recent commitment to historic preservation projects is raising questions – and even some alarm – in Jackson Hole. As historians who have written about the park and advocates of preservation in the park for over 20 years, we want to address those concerns and provide some historical context. These projects, if conducted with sensitivity to the complexities of the park and to all the values it represents, are cause for celebration, not condemnation. The key, of course, is balance of scenic, natural, and historic values.

Many people do not understand that Congress mandated the National Park Service, in its Organic Act of 1916, to “conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein” of its parks. More recently, Grand Teton's mission statement identifies “protection of the Teton Range and its surrounding landscapes, ecosystems, cultural and historic resources” as its responsibilities. In other words, historically significant buildings and sites belong to all of us and require park stewardship, too.

When John D. Rockefeller, Jr. bought up much of the valley in the late 1920s and gave these lands to the Park Service, many structures ranging from homestead cabins to barns to dude ranches came with the gift. For decades, GTNP worked to eliminate these buildings from the park, giving all priority to natural and scenic values. Today about 75 percent of those structures are gone. Twenty years ago a small group of local Jackson Holers and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) realized that some of the remaining buildings deserved to be saved. Park administrators strongly resisted and consequently neglected their responsibilities regarding these cultural resources. Some very valuable structures were lost, most notably Leek's Lodge. In 1986 GTNP slated the Bar BC dude ranch for auction and only last-minute alarms from local and state newspapers halted this violation of law and destruction of one of the most significant historic sites in Grand Teton.

Only over the last decade has the park gradually acknowledged its responsibilities. It conducted studies of the remaining buildings and worked to designate some as worthy of National Register of Historic Places status. Throughout our long involvement with the park, we learned that to save buildings, it was necessary to

use them. The park cannot afford to preserve buildings otherwise. We welcomed, then, superintendent Steve Martin's willingness to move forward on this when he arrived in 2002. Finally, cultural resources advocates had an ally within the park who was interested in saving, while using, the most important historic structures.

All projects currently under consideration – the White Grass Dude Ranch, the Lucas/Fabian cabins, the McCollister place, and the Hunter/Hereford Barn are either on the National

Register or have been deemed eligible and are in the process of final designation. These projects reflect long-term consideration and effort on the part of local people, the SHPO and GTNP. That they are all coming up at once is more a reflection of previous administrations' unwillingness to accept responsibility for historic preservation than a sudden and aggressive form of development. They reflect, in short, a happy occasion: a 20-year logjam has finally been loosened.

Time is of the essence. These buildings are “endangered species” in their own right. They will not propagate themselves. Moving the buildings from their sites is a worst-case scenario. It destroys their integrity and is akin to viewing wildlife in a zoo. Moving a National Register building almost always means losing that designation. Finally, funds for these projects will be raised from outside the NPS. The National Trust's interest in helping to restore the White Grass, for instance, is an exciting prospect – another cause for celebration.

To designate these projects as “sprawl” or to lump them together with the Spring Gulch housing proposal as “development” is simply inaccurate and unfair. History matters here – the history of preservation efforts and the value of these buildings. To be sure, consideration for other values, including wildlife, is critical. But cultural resources must be included in any consideration of balance. Now that GTNP is “on board” regarding historic preservation, we hope others in Jackson Hole will do the same: talk with cultural resources advocates, understand the park's total responsibilities, and support a thoughtful, balanced approach to all of the resources in the park we love.

*Sherry L. Smith and Robert W. Righter are historians and authors with a special interest in Grand Teton National Park.*

## GUEST SHOT

*Sherry L. Smith and Robert W. Righter*

# Values collide in park project

Debate over park's White Grass Ranch focuses on effects of human presence.

By Rebecca Huntington

The orange light of dusk warms the aging timbers of the White Grass Ranch where vines creep over the buildings and weathered wood warps in undulating waves.

The slow decay of the ranch does not bother Karin McQuillan.

"I think they should let it go back to the wild," she said Sunday evening while watching bull elk vie for females in an expansive field bordering the ranch, which sits in Grand Teton National Park near the Death Canyon Trailhead.

"They should let the elk have it," McQuillan said.

The park's natural resources should trump cultural resources at this site, she said while watching mushroom clouds turn orange over Sleeping Indian and listening to coyotes howl. More than a dozen people have gathered at the ranch to watch elk rut.

## Concerns about elk

A National Park Service proposal to renovate the ranch and turn it into the Western Center for Preservation Training and Technology is pitting environmentalists against historic preservationists.

Park Historian Pam Holtman says the park is legally obligated under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to inventory and protect cultural resources. Grand Teton has



Wildlife watchers gather on the battered porch of the White Grass Ranch on an October evening to listen to elk bugle nearby. The fate of the ranch has pitted environmentalists against historic preservationists, and public comments are due Thursday.

NEWS&GUIDE PHOTO / REBECCA HUNTINGTON

about 318 such structures. As for White Grass, specifically, Holtman said the proposed restoration project would protect the buildings without compromising natural resources.

"There is a way to do this responsibly on both sides," Holtman said. "People were at the White Grass property from 1913 to 1985. They cohabited with the elk, the antelope, the birds, the bears, just fine."

McQuillan supports stabilizing the structures but fears renovating and occupying the buildings would flush elk from the field where they rut and alter a serene wildlife watching experience. Fred Smith of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance points to the park's own analysis, which states that increased

human presence would reduce secure habitat for elk and mule deer and could prompt those animals to avoid disturbed areas. The Alliance would like to see the Park Service stabilize the buildings without developing a preservation center or limit the center to day use, he said.

## 4 options for ranch

Holtman, however, said the center would be far less intrusive than the former dude ranch, which ran more than 75 horses in the field where the elk mating ritual plays out. The former owners used to watch the elk rut without displacing them, she said. The ranch would remain open to the public, who would be able to watch the restoration and the rut, park officials said.

Park officials are consider-

ing four alternatives for the ranch, which range from stabilizing the buildings without restoring them to fully renovating the site with new sewer lines and other utilities to accommodate up to 15 overnight visitors and 30 daytime users from April to September. Park officials are accepting public comment on the proposal through Tuesday.

Larry Kummer, of the Teton County Historic Preservation Board, said it is about time the Park Service valued cultural resources.

"Natural resources have been treated as the only resource in the park historically until the last few years," he said. Kummer sees a golden opportunity for the public to learn about restoring historic Western architecture.

JACKSON HOLE NEWS&GUIDE, Wednesday, October 6, 2004 - 5A

## OPINION

# Say No to White Grass, privatizing park

Out of the public eye, and without public debate, there has been a major policy shift in favor of development and private enclaves inside Grand Teton National Park. In the past, unspoiled scenery and wildlife values dictated park policy towards the more than 300 buildings that still exist from pre-park days - former private homes, dude ranches, motels and so forth. Park policy was one of benign neglect for all but a handful of historic structures which were valued for their cultural and educational importance, such as Mormon Row, the Menor's Ferry buildings, the Cunningham Cabin. Other buildings were allowed to peacefully erode away and return the park to nature, wildlife and unspoiled quiet. No more.

According to historian Bob Righter, in a course he gave this summer on the park's heritage, all this changed a few years ago, due to a coalition of forces. Budget cutbacks in the park led to aggressive historic preservation have led to a new policy of "adaptive use." All 300 structures are now deemed suitable for rehab, expansion, addition of infrastructure and new human use - including new paved roads and bridges - creating enclaves closed to the public. Some uses are approved by the park administration, but many buildings are turned over to private, nonprofit groups for their own purposes, and they, too, will be closed to the public.

All buildings in the park are now more than 50 years old, and thus meet the baseline definition to be officially listed as historic structures, irrespective of actual historic merit. Is an expanding human use in the park in the best interests of the park or the public? Do special interest groups have the right to carve out private areas in the park? Is it worth preserving old buildings, when they don't merit being used for history education? None of these questions have been raised for public debate. The policy has been created piecemeal, without proper environmental impact studies, and no regard to overall impact on the park.

The McCollister development is in Antelope Flats, where 30 percent of the park's endangered pronghorn use their birthing grounds. The staff housing planned on Gulch Road is in a riparian area heavily used by elk in the winter. The White Grass Ranch is a core elk rutting ground. The Fabian cabin, a favorite rest spot for

(private) bridge over Cottonwood Creek.

Multiply this for 300 buildings, and we have seriously degraded the park as a wildlife refuge and human refuge. Does the park have the right to turn public land within the park over to private organizations? Doesn't the public have a right to say whether it values saving buildings or preserving quiet and wildlife?

The current project, now open for public comment is the White Grass Dude Ranch, 13 decaying buildings from a 1913 dude ranch, off the road to Death Canyon trailhead. White

Grass is one of the most important areas in the park for the elk during rutting season and where people can quietly observe them. White Grass is to be turned over to a nonprofit called the Western Center for Preservation Training and Technology, which will serve as a training center for rehabbing buildings in the park and throughout the West.

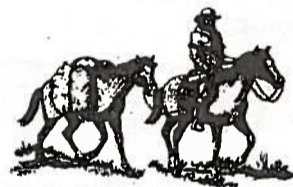
The park Environmental Assessment for the "adaptive use" of White Grass Ranch has a perfunctory description of wildlife impacts which does not even mention the elk rut. It does state, "there will be negligible to minor adverse impacts due to increased disturbance of wildlife ... impacts include ... their continued avoidance of the area and loss of effective habitat ... ." Why is the loss of a major elk rutting ground in the park, and one the public can observe, considered "minor"?

True historic structures, such as Mormon Row and Menor's Ferry, deserve public funds and public access. Those who want every remaining building preserved cannot raise the money to do so without turning them over to other uses. We must not allow privatization and development inside the park based on the principle that money talks, and the public, wildlife, and unspoiled wilderness can go hang.

The park is seeking public comment on White Grass. Please tell them you prefer alternative one, no action, in which the buildings would be protected from collapse, preserved and left alone. Let the elk have White Grass, let the public have access to enjoy wildlife, let private foundations do their work on private land. Send comments to: GRTE\_Planning@nps.ov>GRTE\_Planning@nps.ov, or mail to Mary Gibson Scott, Superintendent, GTNP, P.O. Drawer 170, Moose 83012.

## GUEST SHOT

Karin McQuillan



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OPINION

# The facts about White Grass Ranch

The historic White Grass Ranch is located in Grand Teton National Park and accessed via the Death Canyon Road. The park purchased this ranch in 1956 from Frank Galey, who continued to live there on a life estate until 1985.

Since guest operations ceased, both valley residents and long-distance visitors have continued to express their strong interest in the White Grass Ranch. While the National Park Service has performed some stabilization work on the historic structures, these buildings have remained closed to the public for safety reasons during the last 20 years.

Last October, the Department of the Interior and the National Trust for Historic Preservation entered into a partnership agreement that outlined the potential for preserving, rehabilitating and adaptively using the White Grass Ranch as a Western Center for Preservation Training and Technology. In the agreement, the park committed to evaluate alternatives using the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act compliance procedures.

The National Park Service recently issued an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect, which evaluated various alternatives for the future of White Grass Ranch. The public comment period just ended on Oct. 12. The National Park Service will now analyze those public comments and decide how to proceed with preservation of White Grass Ranch. We will keep you posted regarding this decision.

Pending completion of the Environmental Assessment and selection of an alternative, the National Trust for Historic Preservation is pledging to raise up to one million dollars to use specifically for rehabilitation of the existing White Grass Ranch buildings.

The Center, itself, will be solely owned and operated by the National Park Service. There is no private entity involved. Employees of the National Park Service, volunteers, visiting students, contractors and other federal agency personnel would learn how to stabilize and rehabilitate rustic historic structures and apply those skills to other preservation projects in national parks and public lands throughout the West. The Center would be largely a self-sustaining operation in that tuition from those attending courses would be used to operate the Center.

Establishment of this preservation center would be phased in over several years. Initially, three buildings would be rehabilitated, forming the core base of the Center's operation from which subsequent training courses would be held.

I also want to take a moment to clarify the overall responsibilities of the National Park Service. Our mission is to preserve and protect the nation's natural and cultural resources, and to serve the public. This mandate does not place less priority on cultural vs. natural resources.

As managers, we look at national park lands and their inherent values - cultural and natural - as the legacy we will leave to future generations, warranting the highest degree of protection. Preservation of cultural resources is not an "either-or" proposition. We are charged to manage both, which can make our management actions more challenging and complex.

In Grand Teton National Park there are both extraordinary natural resources and equally important cultural resources. Specifically in Grand Teton there are approximately 300 structures that meet National Register of Historic Places criteria and are designated as "historic buildings." At a minimum, the park needs to stabilize historic structures. Clearly not every building or assemblage of buildings will be rehabilitated and adaptively used. Others, like the White Grass Ranch, are the types of structures which lend themselves to be more fully rehabilitated and used again.

I also want to clarify that the park is still considering the appropriate use, if any, for the Lucas/Fabian Ranch. No decisions have been made regarding this ranch. We will keep the community and the public informed as we consider various options. In the interim, we will continue stabilization efforts at the Lucas/Fabian Ranch.

Anyone wishing to learn more about Grand Teton National Park's various planning projects is invited to visit the park's Web site [www.nps.gov/grte](http://www.nps.gov/grte). There is a link to management documents from our homepage.

I greatly appreciate the continued interest in the park from this most vibrant community!

*Mary Gibson Scott is the superintendent of Grand Teton National Park.*

## GUEST SHOT

Mary Gibson Scott



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## Salvage White Grass

I take exception to a specific in Karin McQuillan's Guest Shot in last week's paper. The specific has to do with the White Grass Ranch.

Some years ago I accompanied Marion Albright Schenck, the daughter of Horace Albright, "Father of the Park Service," to deliver to then-GTNP Superintendent Jack Stark a copy of a letter from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. to her father, then Director of the Park Service. In his letter Rockefeller says: I agree with you, Horace, that we should retain one early dude ranch, one early homestead, and one early cattle ranch for future generations of Park visitors to see.

The only early dude ranch salvageable is the White Grass, which opened for guests in 1913. Save it, I say, in as near original size and simplicity as possible so that future generations can get some idea of what early dude ranching was like. After all, dude ranching opened this valley to visitors from the east and west. The White Grass is an historic site.

If Ms. McQuillan is worried about the elk, she should focus her efforts on the continuation of the National Elk Refuge. If that is discontinued, elk will die by the thousands.

10.13.04

Jack Huyler  
Wilson

## Campaign not sinister

Just recently I found time to read Karin McQuillan's "Guest Shot" (Oct. 6) on the issue of cultural resources in Grand Teton National Park. I was surprised to find my name in her column. McQuillan did, indeed, participate in a course I taught for the Teton Science School on the park's history last summer. I welcomed her participation and know that she appreciates the park's historic sites. However, I disagree with her position on cultural resources and with the language she uses that suggests something sinister is going on in the park.

According to McQuillan, "aggressive historic preservation" advocates have carried on a campaign "out of the public eye" and "without public debate." She has either not been in the Jackson Hole community for long or has not been paying attention.

The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), supported by locals, has been in dialogue with the National Park Service over sites, including the White Grass ranch, for some 25 years. There has been nothing underhanded or secret in these discussions. I have personally participated in many meetings and a number of public debates over the years. Moreover, McQuillan wrote the column to encourage public participation in that decision-making process. The public continues to be heard.

We now have an opportunity to save one of the three historic dude ranches within the park. The JY Ranch, as we know, has been dismantled per the wishes of the late Laurance Rockefeller. The Bar BC is the most historically important, but it is beyond the point of restoration. The best we can hope for is stabilization and some interpretation. Now comes the National Trust for Historic Preservation, whose motives and credentials few would dispute, offering to partner with Grand Teton Park. I hope GTNP will go forward with that project and the community will embrace the idea. Wise use of public lands and historically significant sites which meet the mission of the national parks have a place and deserve our support. Partners who promote those projects should not be cavalierly dismissed as "special interests" nor should they be charged with "privatizing the park." If McQuillan truly believes that the adaptive reuse of the White Grass Ranch represents "privatizing" then I hope she will be consistent by advocating the removal of the Teton Science School, The AMK (administered by the University of Wyoming), and, most recently, the Murie Center. I doubt that the many people from Jackson Hole and around the globe who have enjoyed the many public benefits of these institutions, will join her.

10-20-04

Robert W. Righter  
Jackson

## Save White Grass

I say YES to White Grass Historic Preservation. Last week's opinion contained much hyperbole and misinfor-

mation re the importance of stabilizing and restoring this property for adaptive use. Two years ago when Steve Martin took over the Park Superintendent's reins, a new direction of NPS cultural policy had come into play that offered a "partnering" approach in stabilizing historic structures and making them functional for public use. The recent Murie Center restoration is an excellent example of that policy. Funding from the Park, Saving America's Treasures, and the private sector all contributed financially in making a permanent home for the Murie conservation legacy.

The White Grass Ranch is the third oldest dude ranch in the valley's history, and the last (barely standing) example of what the dude ranching business was all about in the Western, historic fabric of Jackson Hole. The White Grass has been on life support for many years with its long-neglected compound of historic structures. The park's plan for rehab and adaptive use in financial partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation will preserve the White Grass structures as well as provide an educational facility in the NPS Intermountain region where historic preservation can be studied and practically applied in other Western parks where historic buildings are in need of restoration. The Western Center for Preservation Training and Technology would become an important resource for many parks in preservation of their cultural resources.

I hope the people of Teton County as well as Grand Teton National Park will become advocates for preservation of the White Grass and the few remaining properties that are very worthy of saving, and who tell the story of the valley's historic past. Critics who embrace only geology, wildlife and scenic resources within the park need to be reminded of Mr. Rockefeller's broader vision in preserving Grand Teton National Park's historic heritage. He believed the future park ought to be scenic, but also historic. Laurance Rockefeller in 1948 said: "I believe that in July 1926 when my father first visited Jackson Hole, his imagination was fired as much by the valley and its history symbolizing the winning of the West, as by the valley's unique scenic and wilderness areas."

Among all the wildlife and natural splendor within Grand Teton National Park there is a place for our cultural heritage too.

10-20-04

Carol Hofley  
Wilson