

## Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination  
(for OAHP use only)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Initials \_\_\_\_\_  
 Determined Eligible - National Register  
 Determined Not Eligible - National Register  
 Determined Eligible - State Register  
 Determined Not Eligible - State Register  
 Need Data  
 Contributes to eligible National Register District  
 Noncontributing to eligible NR District

## I. Identification

1. Resource number: 5HN68.28
2. Temporary resource number: 10
3. County: Hinsdale
4. City: Lake City
5. Historic building name: Pitkin Guard Armory, Lake City Opera House
6. Current building name: Armory
7. Building address: 230 Bluff Street, Lake City, CO 81235
8. Owner name and address: Town of Lake City, 230 North Bluff Street, Lake City CO 31235

## II. Geographic Information

- County Property No.: RTax exempt
9. P.M. 6th Township 44N Range 4W NE4 of SW4 of SW4 of Section 27
  10. UTM reference  
Zone 13 296600 mE 4211370 mN
  11. USGS quad name: Lake City Quad year: 1985 Map scale: X 7.5' \_\_\_ 15'
  12. Block(s): 57 Lot(s): 27-32 Legal:  
Addition: Year of Addition: 0
  13. Boundary description and justification: Perimeter of parcel

## III. Architectural Description

14. Building plan: Rectangular
15. Dimensions: 7600 square feet
16. Number of stories: 1, 2
17. External wall material(s): Brick
18. Roof configuration: Hipped
19. Roof material: Synthetic
20. Special features: Chimneys, segmental arch openings, decorative cornice
21. General architectural description:

Brick building consisting of two sections: a narrow two-story east section with a flat roof; and a long one-story west section with a vaulted roof. Roof is covered in Hypalon roofing material. All windows are 2-over-2 segmental arched double hungs with stone sills. Windows on first floor of north and west elevations have 2-lite transoms and hood molds with corbelled ends and a stone keystone.

East section has two corbelled brick chimneys at east roof edge and a third near north roof edge. North elevation of east section has corbelled cornice with dog tooth dentils. Wide, concrete foundation band around perimeter of building.

West elevation has two entrances with single paneled doors surmounted by segmental-arched transoms and hood molds with corbelled ends and a keystone.

North elevation has paneled, double doors with segmental arch lintel and two-lite transom. A gabled entry cover supported by triangular knee braces shelters the main entrance. A fourth door at far left/east accesses stairway to upper floor.

South elevation has: a small, centered shed-roofed addition sided in board and batten; paneled, double doors with segmental arch lintel and two-lite transom; small, two-lite segmental arched windows placed high in the wall; and a metal fire escape accessing doorway in second story.

East elevation has segmental-arched 2-over-2 double hungs and a small, solid door with transom enclosed in vertical bars that accessed former jail cell.

Interior walls of the main hall were plastered to a height of 16', stopping at a wood ceiling which was suspended from the roof trusses. Heavy snows in January, 1886, caused the Armory roof to collapse while leaving the walls standing; local contractor Thomas Beam was given the contract to replace the roof. He installed the railroad bridge-like system of roof supports and trusses, connected with iron tie rods, which remain visible to this day.

The inside of the Armory, as it is preserved today reflects, a unique historic interior with its beam and truss system. Walls remain plastered to the 16' height, with red brick and rafter holes left from the original roof visible at the higher levels.

- 22. Architectural style/Building type     Italianate
- 23. Landscaping or special setting:

24. Associated building, features or objects:

Rebekah Hall, circa 1960

Side-gabled frame dwelling with composition roofing and walls clad in hardboard. The flat roof was raised with a front-gabled roof structure around 1980. Window openings are covered in plywood. Off-center entrance on south façade has a solid door and aluminum screen door. Concrete foundation

#### IV. Architectural History

25. Date of construction Estimate: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: 1883 Source of info: MINING REGISTER, SILVER WORLD

26. Architect: Unknown Source of info:

27. Builder/contractor: David Hurd, J. W. Kraft Source of info: MINING REGISTER, SILVER WORLD

28. Original owner: Lake City Building Association Source of info: MINING REGISTER, SILVER WORLD

29. Construction history (major additions, alterations, demolitions):

Openings were cut into the north and south elevations in the early 1950s to accommodate fire equipment. A wide concrete band at ground level around the perimeter building was applied to cover deteriorated bricks.

A 1998-1999 restoration, funded by a State Historical Fund grant, closed large openings on the north and south elevations with smaller, historically accurate doors and windows. Brick and mortar were also repaired.

30. Original location:  Moved  Date of move(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### V. Historical Associations

31. Original use(s): Armory, music facility (opera house), auditorium

32. Intermediate use(s): Music facility (opera house), auditorium, fire station

33. Current use(s): City hall, community center, sports facility

34. Site type(s):

35. Historical background:

Lake City Building Association, comprised of local businessmen, contracted for construction of the Lake City Opera House on two lots at the southeast corner of Bluff Street and Third Street in June, 1883. The project was partially driven by a receding local economy spurred by announcement earlier in the year that the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad would not complete its planned railroad spur up the Lake Fork to Lake City. Among the association's board of directors were such well known businessmen as John S. Hough, H.A. Avery, and A.E. Reynolds, the latter known state-wide as a major mine owner and developer of the early 20th century.

Locally fired red bricks were used in construction of the opera house, which consists of a single main room 50' x 98' with three double doors opening onto Third Street and two single doors on the Bluff Street end. A two-story attachment at the east end is two stories in height, measuring 27' x 50'. Local brick mason Daniel Hurd was the contractor erecting side walls 20' thick, and end walls 16' thick. In addition to Hurd, other contractors were J.J. Mayers, painting, and J.W. Kraft who installed the large expanse of relatively flat roof. Cost of the structure was \$15,000 and furnishings \$5,000, paid in part through the sale of \$10 shares of stock.

The hall was formally opened with a Thanksgiving Eve Ball in 1883. It was said the dedication was "the most brilliant assemblage that ever gathered in this city." As designed, dramatic productions were held on a large stage at the west end of the main hall, while the east end of the hall was used by Co. A, Second Battalion of the Colorado National Guard, known locally as the Pitkin Guards. It was the Guards' use of the hall for a meeting and drill room which prompted the building's historic and current title, the Armory.

The Pitkin Guards occupied a portion of the main public hall, together with the lower level of the building's two-story portion. Three rooms in the second story of the east end were elegantly fitted up for the elite Hinsdale Club. This private, members-only club furnished the rooms with Brussels carpets, desks, two billiard tables, and a reading room stocked with news and literary journals from throughout the world.

Interior walls of the main hall were plastered to a height of 16', stopping at a wood ceiling which was

suspended from the roof trusses. Structural problems were evident from the beginning, and in 1885 it was announced that the ceiling would be removed to lessen the strain on the roof. Heavy snows in January, 1886, caused the Armory roof to collapse while leaving the walls standing; local contractor Thomas Beam was given the contract to replace the roof. He installed the railroad bridge-like system of roof supports and trusses, connected with iron tie rods, which remain visible to this day. The inside of the Armory, as it is preserved today reflects, a unique historic interior with its beam and truss system. Walls remain plastered to the 16' height, with red brick and rafter holes left from the original roof visible at the higher levels.

In intervening decades, the Armory was used for dramatic presentations, school graduation exercises and large public gatherings. These included: observances following the deaths of U.S. President Grant in 1885, and President McKinley in 1901; patriotic rallies at the start of the Spanish American War and World War I; and athletic competitions such as those hosted by the Lake City Greens basketball team in the 1910s and 20s. The hall was the scene of annual Washington's Birthday Masquerades sponsored by J. S. Hough Fire Company, which were held annually from the early 1880s until the 1940s. The old stage remained in use until 1953 when it was removed in order to construct a concrete block interior partition. This allowed use of a new room on the west end of the building for storage of fire fighting equipment. The Lake City town offices moved into the Amory building around 1954. Also in the mid-1950s, the rooms on the lower floor of the two-story portion were installed with steel jail cells for use as the county jail.

Ground floor rooms used as a jail have now reverted to use as offices for the Town of Lake City, while upstairs rooms, old haunts of the Hinsdale County Club, are used as an office, storage, and exercise room by Lake City Area Recreation Department. The partitioned room at the east end of the building, once used for fire equipment storage, is now the Lake City Teen Center, while the main hall continues its use for almost daily athletic events, meetings, and classes offered through Recreation Department

36. Sources of information:

Lake City MINING REGISTER, November 23, 1883, page 3, November 30, 1883, page 3, December 21, 1883, page 3; SILVER WORLD, November 10, 1883, page 3, February 6, 1886, page 3, August 14, 1886, page 3, November 5, 1887, page 3, July 29, 1983, page 1; Gunnison NEWS-CHAMPION, September 3, 1953, page 8.

## VI. Significance

37. Local landmark: Yes  No  Date of design.: \_\_\_\_\_ Design. authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Within Lake City Historic District (local historic district)

38. Applicable National Register Criteria:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory
- Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G
- Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria

39. Area(s) of significance: Social history, military, community development, architecture

40. Period of significance: 1883 -1904

41. Level of significance: National  State  Local

42. Statement of significance:

This building reflects settlement and development of Lake City during the late 1800s mining era. It is also associated with defense, being built during a period of labor unrest. The building's large size and stylish design reflect the civic spirit of early Lake City. The building accommodated community functions and group gatherings for early Lake Citians, as well as providing a place for theatrical and musical performances. It is one of the oldest existing armories in Colorado. Around 1954 the building became the location of administrative offices for the Town of Lake City. The Pitkin Guard Armory/Lake City Opera House is also a good example of the modest version of the Italianate style as seen in Lake City, evidenced by the tall narrow windows and segmental arches used in windows and door openings. Its design and construction in 1883 were restrained by Lake City's lack of railroad transportation that would have brought building materials and decorative features.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity to significance:

The architectural integrity of this dwelling is intact, as evidenced by minimal alterations to its character-defining features. A late 1990s restoration, funded by a State Historical Fund grant, closed large openings on the north and south elevations with smaller, historically accurate doors and windows.

## VII. National Register Eligibility Assessment

44. National Register eligibility field assessment:  Eligible  Not Eligible  Need Data

45. Is there National Register district potential?  Yes  No

Discuss \_\_\_\_\_

If there is National Register district potential, is this building  Contributing  Noncontributing

46. If the building is in an existing National Register district is it?  Contributing  Noncontributing  
(Lake City National Historic District)

## VIII. Recording Information

47. Photograph numbers: Roll 2, frames 4,13; Roll 9, frame 36; Negatives filed at: Lake City Town Hall  
Roll 10, frames 1A-10A; Roll 16,  
frame 7; Roll 30, frames 22A-30A

48. Report title: 2003 Architectural Survey of Lake City, Colorado

49. Date(s): September 2002 - June 2003

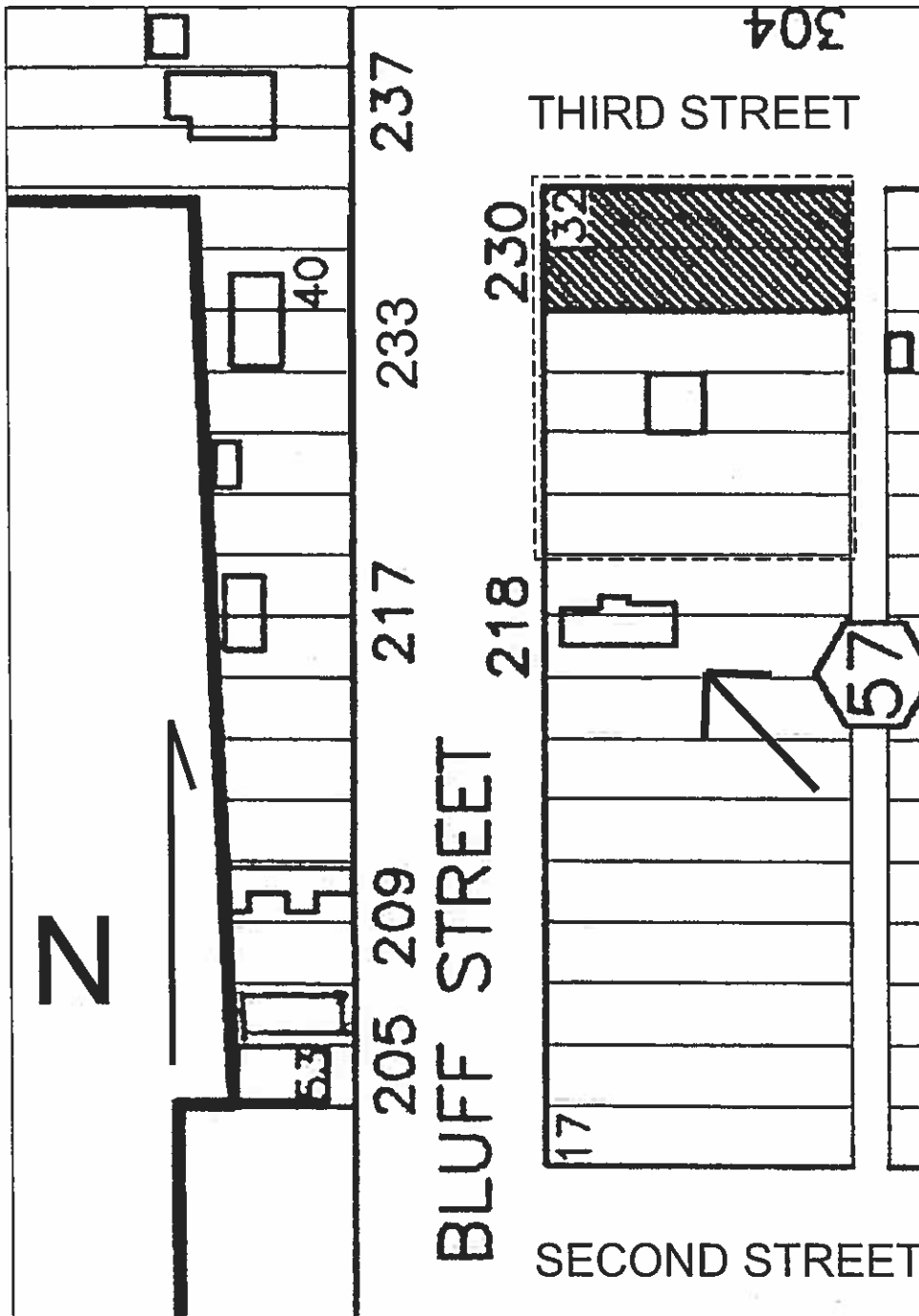
50. Recorders Cathleen M. Norman and Grant E. Houston

51. Organization: Town of Lake City

52. Address: 230 Bluff Street, Lake City CO 81235

53. Phone no. (970) 944-2333

Colorado Historical Society - Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation



NOT TO SCALE