

Teton County Historic Site Survey

1. Name of Property

historic name Frontier Saloon

other name/site number Boyer's Rod & Reel / Indian Arts and Crafts

2. Location

street & number 30 W. Broadway not for publication

city or town Jackson vicinity

state Wyoming code WY county Teton code 039 zip code 83001

3. Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

4. Category of Property

(check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

5. Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>		sites
<u> </u>		structures
<u> </u>		objects
	<u>1</u>	Total

Property Owner

name/title Skippy Boyer Limited Partnership

street & number P. O. Box 647 telephone

city or town Jackson state WY zip code 83001

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

National Register Status:

- Eligible
- Not Eligible
- Unevaluated
- District Potential

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE / TRADE: Specialty Store

Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE / TRADE: Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Commercial log vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls log/wood/stone
roof metal
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Commerce _____

Architecture _____

Period of Significance

c. 1935-1955 _____

Significant Dates

1938 _____

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

Jackson Hole Historical Society _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than two acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/2 5/1/9/1/8/9 4/8/1/4/0/8/2
 Zone Easting Northing

2 1/2 ////// //////
 Zone Easting Northing

3 1/2 ////// //////
 Zone Easting Northing

4 1/2 ////// //////
 Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps**
- **Photographs:** Representative photographs of the property.

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Continuation Sheet

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Frontier Saloon / Boyer's

Narrative Description

The building that currently houses Boyer's Indian Arts and Crafts is one building lot west of the busiest intersection in town, the intersection at the southwest corner of the town square, the intersection that at one time boasted what was known as "the traffic light." Located on Broadway, the building faces north and is very narrow.

When the building was originally constructed, around 1935, it was a simple log (or log plank siding) structure with two large fixed light windows on either side of the main entrance which was centered under a gabled roof. An additional fixed light window was located on the front (north) end of the west elevation. The logs were coped with box corners at the front. A 1962 photograph shows the building generally in its original appearance.

At some point after 1962 the building was extensively remodeled. A board and batten false front with a shed porch extending over the walkway to the street was added and a stone wainscoting was added beneath the large windows. The large window on the west elevation remains, but the log (or log siding) has been covered or replaced with clapboard siding. At the rear (south) of the building a small addition has been built on with a gently sloping flat roof; the south elevation is made of concrete blocks and includes a service entrance and window.

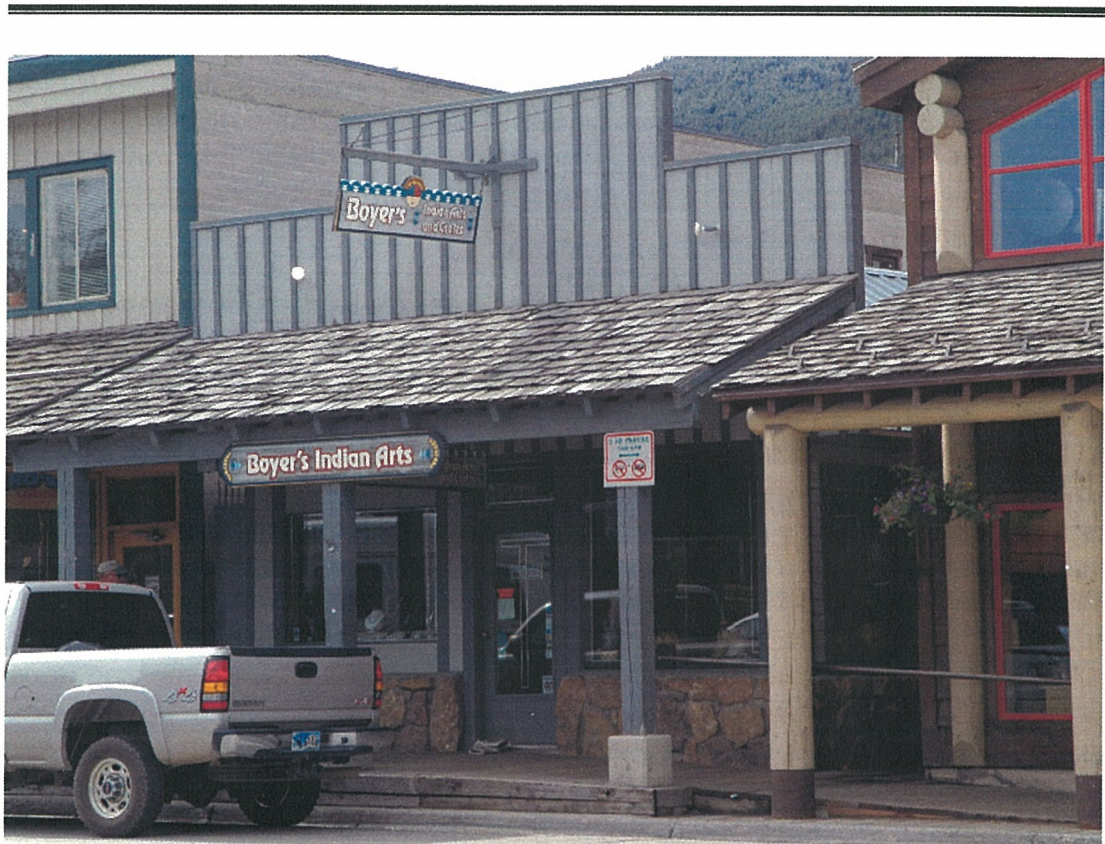
Because of the remodeling of the exterior, the building no longer retains its appearance from the period of significance (prior to 1955), but a close look reveals certain critical features. In the first place, and most fundamentally, the building almost miraculously remains in the same location. It remains, in fact, a building separate from its neighbors on the east and west, an uncommon feature in this town center area where buildings have built next to each sharing walls in recent years. Though dwarfed by large buildings on either side, it still stands alone with modest security barriers preventing passage along the east and west elevations. In addition, with the exception of the rear addition, the building retains its gable roof, again an exception in the predominantly flat-roofed town center business district.

Although the core of the building remains and the general configuration is consistent with its original structure, the appearance of the building has been changed sufficiently, and with good commercial justification, of course, that it no longer holds the integrity of appearance, feel, and materials that it had in the period of historic significance (pre-1955) and is therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, although it excels as a historic building in the Jackson business district.

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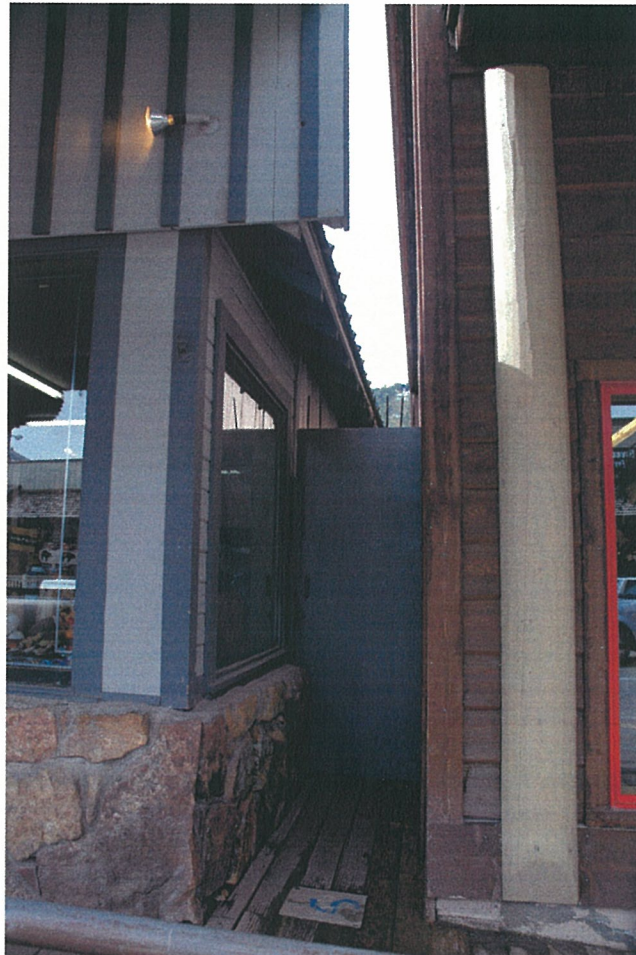


Frontier Saloon / Boyer's Rod and Reel / Indian Arts and Crafts, north elevation, looking southeast. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

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Frontier Saloon / Boyer's Rod and Reel /
Indian Arts and Crafts, west elevation,
looking southeast. Photo: Michael Cassity,
2005.

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Frontier Saloon / Boyer's Rod and Reel / Indian Arts and Crafts, south elevation, looking north. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Frontier Saloon Building should be evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and Criterion C, although integrity issues likely prevent listing on the National Register. Criterion A research indicates that the building's evolution in the period of historic significance reflects the general change in the business district in that time. It is eligible under Criterion C for its architectural and structural qualities.

Criterion A is applicable because of the pattern of business activity associated with the building. Although at least one report identifies the origin of the building as dating to the 1920s, property records in the County Clerk's office show that as late as 1931 the owner of the property (Jesse Wort) was leasing both Lot 2 (of which this uses the west one half) and Lot 1 as a service station to Shell Oil Company. This half of the lot was separated legally only in 1935. While the building may have been constructed prior to this time, the date 1935 is used only because it is the more conservative and verifiable date. Additional research may demonstrate that the building dates to an earlier time.

It is relatively clear that the building served as the home for the Frontier Saloon, although it subsequently housed a series of other retail operations. It is unclear if the Frontier Saloon became the Frontier Café, an institution that existed into the 1950s. By the early 1950s the site was occupied by Poncho's Tackle Shop, and in 1957 it was occupied by Rustique's Curios and Gifts. It may have been other businesses after that, but it returned to the fishing tackle line when Dick Boyer moved to Jackson Hole in 1953. An avid fly fisherman, Boyer had visited and fished Jackson Hole in the years after World War II, and he soon married Lila "Skippy" Wort and in 1962 the Boyers purchased the property from her father John Wort and uncle Jess Wort. The business they operated was the Rod and Reel Shop—specializing once again in fishing tackle, but also providing guide service and float trips. One part of that business also offered Indian jewelry for sale by Lila "Skippy" Boyer, a retail feature that became dominant after her husband's 1972 heart attack interfered with his tackle business. In 1972 the store changed to Indian arts and crafts exclusively.

This series of businesses may seem uneventful, even inevitable, yet it carries within it the threads of a common pattern of business evolution in Jackson. With its original use (a saloon) simply to cater to locals, the building changed its focus to appeal to the growing tourist trade after World War II. This came in two forms. One was the demise of the old saloon. As Donald Hough wrote in 1951 on a subject about which he held clear expertise, "The bars in Jackson, thanks to the summer trade, of late years have become pretty elegant affairs." Whatever else might be said of the Frontier Saloon, it does not seem to have been an elegant affair. The second development is the other side of the demise of the Frontier Saloon, the rise of fishing as an avocation sufficient to keep a business that catered to it afloat, and this too can also be seen at this address. The appeal (and some would say science) of fly-fishing in this area actually was a late development. Jack Dennis reports that "A man by the name of Bob Carmichael . . . literally built the very first Western fly shop. It didn't happen in West Yellowstone; it happened in Jackson Hole. He actually bought an existing fly-shop there in

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Moose, Wyoming, and he opened his in the [late thirties]." Dennis suggests, using documents from Bob Carmichael, that the rise of fly-fishing in Jackson Hole's streams and rivers can be traced to the 1940s and this would coincide with the altered use of this building. That use took an additional shift as it switched from fishing tackle to Indian arts and crafts, suggesting also a shift in the tourist demand in Jackson Hole, or at least in the business district of Jackson. The evolution of businesses in these walls reflects the larger pattern of business and the rise of Jackson as a tourist economy.

The building is also significant for its architectural features. It would be possible to make too much of this, but it bears repeating that in a business district in which old buildings have been routinely replaced by new buildings made to look "Old West," even if they bear no resemblance to the buildings that the Jackson businesses and homes actually occupied, the persistence of this building which once reflected the main trends in the local economy and culture has come to be an exception to the recent trend in local architecture and is thereby worthy of note. If interest exists in nominating this building to the National Register, that interest should not be discouraged, but the challenges will be substantial.

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Bibliography

- Bantjes, Adrian A., "The Past and Present of Fly-Fishing in Jackson Hole, Wyoming: An Interview with Jack Dennis," *Annals of Wyoming*, 76 (spring 2004), 19-25.
- "Boyer, 73, Was last of Jackson's Wort Family," *Jackson Hole News & Guide*, July 27, 2005.
- Hough, Donald, *The Cocktail Hour in Jackson Hole* (worland, Wyoming: High Plains Publishing Company, Inc., n.d.); reprint of 1951 edition.
- Interview with Homer Richards, June 13, 1983, in Jackson Hole Historical Society Oral History Collections.
- "Jackson's Oldest Indian Art Store Hits Middle Age," *Jackson Hole News*, June 24, 1992.
- Land Records, Office of the County Clerk, Teton County, Wyoming.
- "Services Held for Jackson Businessman Dick Boyer," *Jackson Hole News*, October 28, 1995.
- Telephone Directories, Mountain States Telephone Company, 1946, 1948, 1953, 1955, 1964.

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Frontier Saloon / Boyer's

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

This property consists of the west one half of lot 2, block 1, Wort Addition, Town of Jackson.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the property historically associated with the Frontier Saloon and subsequent businesses.

Frontier Saloon

