

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Shell Community Hall
other names/site number Shell Community House

2. Location

street & number 201 Smith Avenue

N/A

 not for publication
city or town Shell

N/A

 vicinity
state Wyoming code WY county Big Horn code 003 zip code 82441

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
___ national ___ statewide **X** local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn County,
Wyoming
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Depression Era Federal Projects in Wyoming
1929-1943

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

SOCIAL: Clubhouse

SOCIAL: Civic

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

SOCIAL: Clubhouse

SOCIAL: Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RUSTIC VERNACULAR

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: ROCK OVER DIRT

walls: LOG

roof: METAL

other:

Narrative Description

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn County

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph:

The Shell Community Hall is located at 201 Smith Avenue on the corner of Smith Avenue and 2nd Street. Smith Avenue runs along the property's western boundary and 2nd Street runs along the property's southern boundary. The Shell Church is located along the northern boundary; there is no barrier between the two properties. A private property is located along the eastern boundary; a two-rail, log fence runs nearly the length of the eastern boundary creating a partial barrier between the two properties. The property does not have vehicle access; vehicles can be parked along both Smith Avenue and 2nd Street, but there is no parking on the property. Pedestrian access is possible from the adjacent church property, Smith Avenue, or 2nd Street. The building is located in a mixed-use urban area in downtown Shell, Wyoming. The lot is 117 feet by 250 feet.

The original building (known as the Main Hall) was constructed in 1933 - 1934 by the Civil Works Administration. A kitchen/bath addition (known as Kitchen addition) was constructed on the north side of the original building in 1971. In 2007, a new front entrance (known as Entrance addition) was constructed on the southern elevation. The original entrance to the Shell Community Hall was located on the western elevation and faced Smith Avenue. The entrance was moved to the Kitchen Addition in 1971. The 2007 Entrance addition changed the building's main entrance to the south elevation; however, the building can still be accessed through the Kitchen addition. The original entrance was filled in with logs.

Narrative Description

Setting

There is not any significant vegetation on the property. There is a large patch of grass on the northwest corner of the property and a small tree near the east wall of the kitchen addition. The rest of the vegetation are native plants, which grow sparsely around the property. There are several large cottonwood trees located on surrounding properties, particularly at the small city park on the opposite side of Smith Avenue. An octagonal shaped gazebo is located near the northwest corner of the kitchen addition. The gazebo has log posts, a cement base, and a green tin roof. There is a small gable-roofed, wooden "Free Library" box attached to one of the gazebo posts. There is an electrical pole to the west of the structure. A stone marker is located near the northwest corner of the original building; it is set on top of a square concrete pad. The marker has a plaque which reads "SHELL, WYOMING SETTLED BY J.L. SMITH 1886". There is a concrete pad running along the entire western elevation of the Main Hall as well as a concrete sidewalk leading from Smith Avenue to the entrance of the kitchen addition.

Exterior

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn County

The Shell Community Hall is a Rustic Vernacular building. The original Main Hall was constructed of chinked, round, peeled, semi-saddle notched logs on a rock foundation. It has a gambrel roof covered with green metal panels and painted brown, wooden shingles on the gable ends. The Kitchen addition and Entrance addition were constructed of peeled, round logs with corner posts and no chinking. The logs extend up the gable end on the Entrance addition. There is horizontal wood board siding on the kitchen gable end. Both additions have gable roofs covered with the same metal sheeting as the Main Hall. There is a brick and metal chimney on the northern slope of the Main Hall and a metal chimney located near the peak on the eastern slope of the Kitchen addition.

Facade

The façade of the Shell Community Hall faces 2nd Avenue. The Entrance addition protrudes off center from the Main Hall. There are three windows on the Main Hall; they are identical in size, shape and design. The windows are 8 over 8 double hung with wooden shutters. The fenestration is not symmetrical.

There is a double door entrance located on the Entrance addition. The doors are white fiberglass; each door has a single pane fixed window located in the top half of the door. Above the doors is an exterior floodlight and a metal vent. There is a concrete pad in front of the doors that extends the length of the Entrance addition.

Western Elevation

The western elevation of the Shell Community Hall faces Smith Avenue. The Main Hall, Kitchen addition, and Entrance addition are all visible from this elevation. The main hall has two 6 over 6 double hung, unadorned windows located on either side of the original entrance, which has been filled in with logs. The two windows have wooden shutters. A basketball hoop has been added to the top of the door frame. The fenestration on the Main Hall is symmetrical.

The Entrance addition has a single, two pane sliding window located near where the addition meets the original structure.

The Kitchen addition has a door and a window. The door is wooden. There is a low-pitch gable porch above the entrance. It is approximately 9 feet wide by 6 feet deep, has wooden posts and visible wooden beams. The window is to the north of the door; it is a two-pane sliding window. There is an electrical box located near the junction of the Main Hall and Kitchen Addition.

Northern Elevation

The Kitchen addition protrudes from the exact middle of the northern elevation of the Main Hall. There are two windows on the Main Hall. On the western side of the Kitchen addition, there is a 6 over 6 double hung window with wooden shutters. On the eastern side of the Kitchen addition there is an 8 over 8 double hung window, which is currently boarded up.

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn County

There are two windows and a door on the northern elevation of the Kitchen addition. The windows are both 2-pane sliding windows; the window on the west is smaller than the window on the east. The door is set between them; it is a wooden panel door with a fixed 9 pane window on the top half. There is a concrete stoop in front of the door. There is a white exhaust panel near the peak of the gable end. The fenestration is not symmetrical.

Eastern Elevation

Both the Kitchen addition and the Entrance addition are visible from the eastern elevation. There are three windows spaced equal distance apart on the eastern elevation of the Kitchen addition. The windows are all the same size and design; they are 2 pane sliding windows.

On the eastern elevation of the Main Hall, there is a single wood panel door. It is approximately three feet above the ground and there is no stoop or porch to connect it to the ground. There are no windows. An air conditioning unit is set on the northern side of the Main Hall.

There is one window on the eastern elevation of the Entrance addition; it is a 2-pane sliding window identical in placement, size, and design to the window on the western elevation of the Entrance addition.

Interior

Entrance Addition

The Shell Community Hall Entrance is a single story, wood paneled room. The ceiling is covered in the same wood paneling with a fluorescent light located in the middle. The floor is covered with ceramic tile. There are two peg-style coat racks flanking the door; the door is located in the center of the wall. The peg style coat racks extend around the western and eastern sides of the room, but are not attached to the original exterior of the Main Hall. Above the entrance are three boards on which are the local rancher's brands. There are similar boards with rancher's brands placed above each window. The western and eastern walls each have a 2-pane sliding window located near the Main Hall. There is a bench placed next to the door on its western side.

On the northern end of the room is the entrance into the Main Hall. There is a white fiberglass door separating the two interior rooms. Above the door is a wooden sign with the word "Welcome" burned into it in cursive.

Main Hall

The Main Hall is a large, open 1 1/2-story room with an exposed gambrel roof. The roof is covered in wood panels that have been painted white. The walls are exposed log. The floor is wood and painted to resemble a basketball court.

There are three windows in the southern wall. The windows are identical 8 over 8 double hung.

There is a large stage set into the wall on the eastern side of the Main Hall. The stage is approximately three feet above the ground and approximately 12 feet deep. It is centered in the wall with nine feet on either side. Two doors flank the stage; the doors are solid wood and level with the stage. There are no stairs to either door.

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn County

A large maroon curtain hangs along the top of the stage. On the northern side of the stage, there is a staircase to the small basement.

The entrance to the Kitchen addition is located on the northern wall; a wood panel door with 2 pane fixed light separates the Main Hall from the Kitchen addition. There is a large interior window to the east of the door; this window opens into the Kitchen addition and is approximately 8 feet by 3 feet. There are two exterior windows in the northern wall; they are identical 8 over 8 double hung.

There are two windows in the western wall. The windows are identical 6 over 6 double hung windows. They flank the original entrance, which has been filled in with logs. There is a basketball hoop fixed above the original entrance.

Kitchen Addition

An L-shaped hallway extends from the Main Hall into the Kitchen addition. The Main Hall and Kitchen addition are separated by a solid wood door with the fixed single pane windows located in the top third of the door. The walls in the hallway are wood panel; the floor in linoleum. The western wall is the exterior wall with no windows. At the end of the hall - located on the western wall - is an exterior door, which is a wood panel with a 9-pane fixed window. The bathrooms are located along the hallway; the men's bathroom is to the south and the women's bathroom is to the north.

The hallway makes a 90 degree turn to the east and leads into a large Kitchen/Dining room space. The floors throughout this room are linoleum and the walls are wood paneled. There is a wood panel door located on the northern wall; the door has a fixed 9 pane window. There is also a window along the north wall; it is a 2 pane sliding window. There are three identical 2 pane sliding windows located along the eastern wall. There is a large open window looking into the Main Hall on the southern wall of the Kitchen.

Basement

The basement is located directly under the stage in the Main Hall and is approximately 10 feet by 20 feet. The basement has concrete walls. The furnace is located in the basement.

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

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.

- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Period of Significance

1933-1971

Significant Dates

December 11, 1933

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Civil Works Administration

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.

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance for the Shell Community Hall is from the Shell Community Hall Committee's application to the Civil Works Administration on December 11, 1933 until 1971 – a date chosen to coincide with the property's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.) (Refer to narrative.)

Located in Shell, Big Horn County, Wyoming, the Shell Community Hall was built between December 1933 and March 1934 with funding assistance from the Civil Works Administration. The Shell Community Hall is significant on a local level under Criterion A, because of its association with the Civil Works Administration and its significance to the social history of Shell, Wyoming. It meets the registration requirements for Wyoming's Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) *Depression Era Federal Projects in Wyoming, 1929-1943*.

The Shell Community Hall was built to create a space for community social events, business meetings, and school programs, etc. as well as to increase employment in the community during a time of high unemployment. The hall is an example of the positive and lasting impact that Great Depression New Deal Programs had on small communities in Wyoming. The Shell Community Hall is one of a few remaining Civil Works Administration buildings in Wyoming. Despite two additions made to the building (one addition made during the period of significance and one addition made outside of the period of significance), it maintains its integrity. The area surrounding the Shell Community Hall has changed very little in the years since the building's construction. The Shell Community Hall continues to be used as originally intended - it is a community center hosting school events, sporting events, and business meetings as well as weddings and dances – ergo, the hall maintains integrity of feeling and association.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

History of Shell, Big Horn County, Wyoming

Shell, Wyoming – population 83 - is located in Big Horn County, Wyoming. Big Horn County is located along the Wyoming/Montana border and just west of the Bighorn Mountains. Big Horn County occupies “most of the northeastern portion of the Bighorn Basin” (Hein para. 1). Shell Creek, with its source at 11,000 feet, flows down the west side of the Big Horn Mountains; it reaches the Big Horn River about 50 miles from its source.

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Archaeologists believe that mammoth hunters occupied the Bighorn Basin approximately 10,000 years ago. The Medicine Wheel/Medicine Mountain National Historic Landmark is located in the Bighorn Mountains; archaeologists believe that the Medicine Wheel is less than 1000 years old (Chapman para 4). Further, there is archaeological evidence of the Crow tribe in the 1700s.

The earliest recorded Euro-American presence in the Bighorn Basin was beaver trapper George Drouillard in 1807 (Hein para 4). Drouillard explored the area as a part of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804 and returned to the area as a trapper. After Drouillard, the Missouri Fur Company sent an expedition through the Bighorn Basin in 1823-1824; the expedition was led by General William Ashley (Hein para 5). There are unsubstantiated claims that Spanish explorers were also in the Bighorn Basin. Tacetta B. Walker's book *Early Days in Wyoming*, published in 1936, details two discoveries by early settlers indicating a Spanish presence in the area in the 1700s and early 1800s. First, Walker describes how Harry Smith (one of the first documented Euro-American settlers in the Shell area) found several old Spanish coins at a campsite that locals later referred to as Spanish Diggings. The coins were dated in the 1700s. Second, a local man named Charlie Trone and his comrade - a man described as "a horse thief known as Loco" (Walker p. 2) – found an old flint-lock gun dated 1827 hanging up in a tree near Medicine Lodge Butte; it is not clear if the gun were of Spanish descent or not.

Recorded Euro-American settlement of the Shell Valley began in the early 1870s with ranching. Cattlemen established large ranches in the area and ran cattle throughout the Big Horn Mountains. The largest cattleman in the Shell area was Henry Clay Lovell. Together with Kansas City capitalist Anthony Mason, he formed the M-L Ranch and ran approximately 25,000 cattle through the Big Horn Basin. Otto Franc von Lictenstein established his ranch near the Greybull River; he had nearly 1200 cattle and the town of Otto was named for him.

Jack Copman was the first known Euro-American man to build a residence along Shell Creek, near the present-day town of Shell. Copman was a bit of an eccentric. A well-educated man of German Swiss descent, he claimed to have put in a patent for a glider that he was able to fly without an engine; he operated the glider using his hands and his feet. Copman was also employed as a guide for wealthy foreigners. With his partner Bob Rath, Copman "built the first good house in the Shell Country. This was a log house but the flooring and door casings were hauled in from Billings [Montana]" (Walker pg. 4).

Jordan Latham Smith and his wife Mary Colyer Smith are widely regarded as the founders of Shell. Just after the Civil War, the Smiths left their home in Smithtown, Long Island and made the perilous journey across the United States to Wyoming Territory. Many of their descendants have claimed that they were on their way to Oregon. The Smiths came into Wyoming Territory in 1884. They spent two years on Deep Creek Canyon at Mahogany Buttes - near the present-day town of Worland – before heading through the hills from Tensleep. They stopped first at Trapper Creek and eventually arrived at Shell Creek in June of 1886. Upon arriving at Shell Creek, the family found that they could not travel any further. Spring runoff from the Big Horn Mountains had flooded both Shell Creek and the Big Horn River, making them impossible for wagons. It was not possible for the family to bypass the rivers; the Big Horn Mountains were daunting for wagon travel. About 6 miles from the mountain face, the creek forms a small valley in which the Smith family found an abandoned

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

trapper's cabin. According to local legend, Mary and the oldest daughter were tired and told Jordan that they wanted to build a house and plant a garden near Shell Creek. Jordan and his older sons took up homesteads in the valley.

The winter of 1886 was a particularly brutal winter in Wyoming and much of the Northern Great Plains. Several large snowstorms inundated the Northern Plains with heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures; one storm dropped an inch of snow an hour for 16 straight hours. A short warm spell in January briefly thawed the snow, but frigid temperatures returned and created a sheet of ice, which cattle were incapable of breaking through. Free range cattle starved and froze to death. The Smith family were lucky, though; their livestock survived the historic winter of 1886. The family grazed their small herd of cattle and horses in the creek bottom and supplemented their feed with grass hay scythed by the men in the summer. Others were not as lucky. A large part of the M-L Ranch longhorn herd died in the deep snow and freezing temperatures. Large cattle operations went bankrupt as a result of the winter of 1886. Historians estimate that Wyoming ranchers lost 75% of their cattle during that winter (Mason-Lovel Ranch...para 2) The Smiths said the Big Horn River ran cow carcasses all that next summer.

Most of the new arrivals in the Shell Creek Valley first stopped at Smith's "free hotel." Jordan rode with the head of the new family to locate a satisfactory spot for a homestead on Shell Creek or near a smaller creek, which could provide irrigation water. Between 1887 and 1900, many of the Shell Creek tributaries were homesteaded. The Smith home served as the first Shell Post Office, and Jordan and his older sons established a mail route to the east over the Big Horns.

The Smiths laid off a town site on a part of Jordan's homestead land and sold lots for a general store, a hotel, a Woodsman's Lodge, a small sawmill, and private homes. New residents found employment with the rancher-homesteaders; they ran a town herd of milk cows, raised poultry and grew huge gardens whose bounty was distributed among the old and needy. The Smith family gave the lots for a church and future community hall to the fledgling town, and the Smiths oversaw the building of a church using lumber from the new sawmill.

There is a bit of historical disagreement over how the town of Shell was named. While it is commonly acknowledged that the town of Shell was named after the creek, there is some dispute over how the creek came to be called Shell Creek. Many believe that Jordan Smith named the creek after prehistoric shells that are found throughout the area. According to Walker, Jordan's son disputed this and claimed that the creek was already named Shell Creek when the family arrived in the area. Walker believed that the town was named after Dick Shell. Dick Shell worked for the M-L Ranch as a cattleman. One day, he was rounding up cattle with Fred Whitney when they happened upon Shell Creek. According to Walker, "Dick Shell fell in love with the country and said that he was going to come back and take up land at the head of this creek" (Walker pg. 2). From that point onward, cattlemen referred to the creek as Shell's Creek. It was later shortened to Shell Creek. Many of the cattlemen who worked for M-L Ranch settled in the Shell area, including Fred Whitney; Whitney was one of Walker's sources for his book.

The Civil Works Administration

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

The Civil Works Administration (CWA) was established on November 9, 1933 by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration in response to massive unemployment in the early years of the Great Depression. Headed by Harry Hopkins, the CWA was a subdivision of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and designed to be a temporary federal relief program to help assist the over 12 million unemployed American workers through the 1933-1934 winter. It's goal was to employ 4 million Americans by December. Within two months of its inception "the CWA had 4,263,644 formerly unemployed workers on its payroll" (Civil Works Administration (CWA) para. 2).

Despite initially opposing accepting federal relief assistance, Wyoming Governor Leslie Miller's position changed as worsening unemployment threatened Wyoming citizens. There are not any exact statistics regarding unemployment in Wyoming in 1933, but historians estimate that approximately 20,000 or one in five Wyoming residents were receiving federal assistance (Cassity pg. 82). Wyoming's Civil Works Administration headquarters were established in Wyoming's vacant Governor's Mansion. The agency was initially led by Burke Sinclair; however, he was moved to Washington DC within a few weeks of his appointment and replaced by Will Metz.

Although not universally popular in Wyoming, the CWA was certainly effective. There were CWA projects in every county of the state and "probably in every community, large or small, and in almost all the neighborhoods and the multitude of school districts in the state. The CWA *was* the New Deal to much of Wyoming in 1933 and 1934" (Cassity pg. 85). At its height, the CWA employed 10,738 Wyoming citizens. There were 932 CWA projects in Wyoming between November 1933 and April 1934, including the Shell Community Hall.

The Shell Community Hall

On Sunday, December 10, 1933, citizens of Shell met at the Shell Store to discuss the possibility of building a community hall. They appointed a Committee to oversee the process. Committee members included Harry Lee, Mrs. F.C. Hormel, George Patterson, and Frank Barhart. T.E. Spencer was elected Chairman. The following day - December 11, 1933 - Spencer sent a letter to the Wyoming Civil Works State Administrator Will Metz requesting help funding the labor to build the Shell Community Hall on land that had been purchased by the Shell Women's Club.

In T. E. Spencer's 1933 letter to Mr. Metz, he concluded with this plea:

For the welfare of the community we feel that the community hall is very important. Right now, we have nothing to offer the young people in the way of amusement. It is, therefore, necessary for them to seek pleasure elsewhere. To provide for the leisure time in the community will increase the morals which needs bolstering when time must be given consideration.

Their request was approved on December 22, 1933. Construction on the Community Hall began immediately. According to local citizens, the community of Shell galvanized their support. They milled logs in the Big Horn Mountains, and with the help of a CWA Crew, the Shell Community Hall was built. The project took less than four months to complete; it was finished on March 31, 1934. According to the CWA's Report of Completed,

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Transferred, or Discontinued Projects: “This project was completed and the building proved to be a worth one. This building is equipped with a fine dance floor” (Federal Civil Works Administration Report of Completed, Transferred, or Discontinued Projects). The Shell Community Hall cost approximately \$2900 to complete.

A brief article published in the May 27, 1934 edition of the Billings Gazette stated:

Shell’s new community hall will be dedicated, May 30, with a program, dinner and dance. Addresses will be made by Paul G. Reever of Cody, Judge Percy W. Metz of Basin Winston Howard, F.H. Schuyler and Riley Wilson, all of Greybull. The address of welcome will be made by Harry Lee.

The Shell Community Hall was a welcome addition to the town. Prior to the hall being built a Woodsmen Lodge and an outdoor dance pavilion were utilized for social events and community gatherings, but both had outlived their usefulness. After completion, the Shell Community Hall hosted both informal and formal events. The Shell School’s annual Christmas and Spring Programs were held annually on the stage from the 1930s to the 1980s. Basketball games at the Shell Community Hall entertained the kids for generations. In the 1940s, if the kids could not locate a key, they would send some poor soul down the coal chute to shimmy up through the floor and unlock the door.

Following prohibition, the Shell Woman’s Club hosted table dances almost monthly. At a table dance, attendees could purchase a table for their friends and family to sit at and the Woman’s Club sold mixers. Shell had a fine group of musicians to provide the music. The Shell Community Hall was notorious for their dances, and they did alleviate a lot of cabin fever. The Women’s Club had a small concession building outside of the hall for snacks and mixers. They also hosted dinners and fundraisers to maintain the hall.

As the Shell Women’s Club members grew older, other groups took over maintenance. In 1954, the floor was sanded; the Shell Rough Rider’s 4-H group used burlap bags to prepare it for varnish. The Shell Rough Rider’s became involved in the hall’s maintenance; they still help with service projects for the hall, and they hold their meetings at the hall.

In 1971, a group of citizens formed a committee to add a meeting room and kitchen. This group raised money, acquired a loan, and provided the labor to build the addition. Throughout the years insulation has been added, as well as indoor bathrooms, a roof replacement, air-conditioning, an entryway, and sound system.

Currently, the Shell Community Hall has an elected board that oversees the building. Members serve a two- or three-year term. The board maintains the hall, coordinates events, encourages the use of the hall, and fundraises. The board sponsors breakfasts, dances, dinners, art shows, and youth events. The board holds an annual meeting each year to report on the health of the hall and solicit community input and support.

The Shell Community Hall continues to be a central location for community gatherings.

Shell Community Hall

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming
County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate) For Bill Hayes Beginnings of Shell

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Cassity, Michael. *Building Up Wyoming: Depression -Era Federal Projects in Wyoming, 1929-1933*. Cheyenne, Wyoming, Wyoming State Historical Preservation Office, Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources

Chapman, Fred. "Medicine Wheel/Medicine Mountain: Celebrated and Controversial Landmark." <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/medicine-wheel>

"Civil Works Administration." *National Park Service*. 9 Feb. 2021.
<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/civil-works-administration.htm>

"Civil Works Administration (CWA) (1933)" *The Living New Deal*. 8 Feb. 2021.
<https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/civil-works-administration-cwa-1933/>

Ehrlich, Edith. *The Shell Valley, An Oral History*. Shell Centennial, 2nd Edition, 1 Jan. 1986.

"Essay: The Federal Emergency Relief Administration." *University of Washington Libraries*. 10

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Feb. 2021. <https://content.lib.washington.edu/feraweb/essay.html>

“Essay: The Civil Works Administration.” *University of Washington Libraries*. 10 Feb. 2021.
<https://content.lib.washington.edu/civilworkswb/essay.html>

Federal Civil Works Administration. *Report of Completed, Transferred, or Discontinued Projects*. 17 April 1934.

Hein, Rebecca. “Big Horn County, Wyoming.”
<https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/big-horn-county-wyoming>

“Mason-Lovell Ranch.” *NPS.gov*, 27 Sept. 2021,
<https://www.nps.gov/bica/learn/historyculture/mason-lovell-ranch.htm>

“Remarks on Signing Executive Order Creating Civil Works Administration.” *The American Presidency Project*. 8 Feb. 2021. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-signing-executive-order-creating-civil-works-administration>

Spencer, T.E. Letter to Will Metz. 11 Dec. 1933. Wyoming State Archives.

Walker, Tacetta. *Early Days in Wyoming*. Prairie Publishing Company. 1 Jan. 1936

“Will Dedicate Hall.” *Billings Gazette* [Billings, MT], 27 May 1934, p. 6.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: **Big Horn County Courthouse Basin, Wyoming**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property .53 Acre

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property

County and State

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>279257</u> Easting	<u>4935117</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.) Shell Old Town Block 15 Lot 1-8

The western boundary is adjacent to Smith Avenue. The northern boundary is adjacent to a private property. The eastern boundary is adjacent to a private property and delineated by a fence. The southern boundary is adjacent to 2nd Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries around the Shell Community Hall form a periphery around the historic site containing the Shell Community Hall.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill Hayes and Lisa Anderson; Bethany Kelly/Cultural Resource Specialist WYSHPO
organization Shell Community Hall Board date 08-10-2020
street & number 201 Smith Avenue telephone 307 765-2732
city or town Shell state Wyoming zip code 82441
e-mail khaki75@aol.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

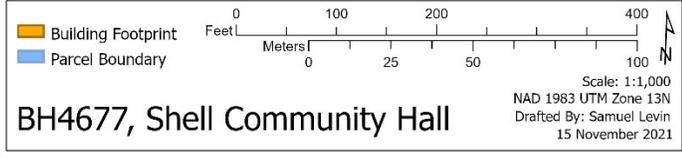
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Shell Community Hall

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming
County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming



Shell Community Hall

Name of Property
 Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming
 County and State
 Big Horn, Wyoming



Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. (Cell phone photos will be sent to Brian Beadles or any e-mail the board designates.)

Name of Property: Shell Community Hall
 City or Vicinity: Shell
 County: Big Horn State: Wyoming
 Photographer: Bill Hayes, Bethany Kelly
 Date Photographed: Winter 2020, Summer 2021
 Description of Photograph(s) and number:

South façade, photographer facing north.
 1 of 26

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

South façade, western elevation, photographer facing northeast
2 of 26

West elevation, photographer facing southeast
3 of 26

West elevation, photographer facing east
4 of 26

North elevation, photographer facing southeast
5 of 26

North elevation, photographer facing south
6 of 26

North elevation, photographer facing south
7 of 26

West elevation, south façade, photographer facing northwest
8 of 26

Stone Marker, photographer facing west
9 of 26

Log corner structure, photographer facing southwest
10 of 26

Entrance addition, photographer facing south
11 of 26

Entrance addition, photographer facing north
12 of 26

Main Hall, photographer facing southeast
13 of 26

Main Hall, photographer facing east
14 of 26

Main Hall, photographer facing north
15 of 26

Main Hall, entrance hallway, photographer facing north
16 of 26

Main Hall, photographer facing west
17 of 26

Entrance hallway, photographer facing north
18 of 26

Entrance hallway, photographer facing southeast
19 of 26

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall
Kitchen/Bath addition exterior entrance, photographer facing east
20 of 26

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Kitchen/Bath addition hallway, photographer facing east
21 of 26

Kitchen/Bath addition, dining room, photographer facing northeast
22 of 26

Kitchen/Bath addition, dining room/kitchen, photographer facing east
23 of 26

Kitchen/Bath addition, kitchen, photographer facing south
24 of 26

Kitchen/Bath addition, kitchen, photographer facing southwest
25 of 26

Kitchen/Bath addition, kitchen, photographer facing north
26 of 26

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Shell Community Hall Board
street & number 201 Smith Avenue telephone 307 765-2118 or 765-2732
city or town Shell state Wyoming zip code 82441

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Shell Community Hall

Big Horn, Wyoming

Name of Property
Shell Community Hall

County and State
Big Horn, Wyoming

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.