

RECEIVED

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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Casper Motor Company, Natrona Motor Company

other names/site number Yellowstone Flea Market

2. Location

street & number 230 West Yellowstone Highway not for publication N/A  
city or town Casper vicinity N/A  
state Wyoming code WY county Natrona code 25 zip code 82601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide  locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

John J. Keck  
Signature of certifying official

11/12/93  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
4. National Park Service Certification  
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*M. J. M. W.*

2/23/94

\_\_\_\_\_  
for Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
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

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Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Commerce/Trade</u>	Sub: <u>Specialty store</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Commerce/Trade</u>	Sub: <u>Specialty store</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

=====  
7. Description  
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof asphalt (rolled roofing)

walls brick

other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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8. Statement of Significance  
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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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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 (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Commerce  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Period of Significance 1918-1943  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates 1918 (date of construction)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Unknown

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>391600</u>	<u>4744640</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

name/title Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian  
organization Rosenberg Historical Consultants date June 28, 1993  
street & number 739 Crow Creek Road telephone (307)632-1144  
city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82009

=====  
Additional Documentation  
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

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

name: A.P. Leasing Company

street & number: Box 2185

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town: Casper

state: WY zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Description

The building that currently houses the Yellowstone Flea Market was constructed in 1918 by Albert Majors and Benjamin Mueller to house the Casper Auto Company, an auto showroom and garage run by B.B. Lummis. The building represents elements of the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. It occupies Lots 2 and 3 and a strip in Block 67 on the northwest corner of David Street and West Yellowstone Highway a short distance west of the downtown commercial district of Casper. It is flanked on the southwest by a paint store of smaller proportions. The area to the northeast is occupied by a bank drive-up facility and parking lot, currently abandoned.

This large two-story brick building (100' E-W X 114' N-S) rests on a concrete foundation with a full basement. The building frame consists of wood beams and posts and concrete posts in the basement. The ground floor currently houses a flea market with numerous individually rented spaces. The partial second floor consists of a large office area in the center of the south third of the building and a large storage area (84' x 21') running along the east wall of the building. The remainder of the interior is open to the ceiling, revealing a system of large wooden roof trusses with steel rod ties with turnbuckles. The first floor is composed of reinforced concrete. Below the first floor, there is a full basement finished in concrete with reinforced concrete supports. Because the building was constructed on a lot that slopes steeply downhill to the north, the basement is accessed via Industrial Street, the next street to the north. The basement is not currently in use, but future plans call for the flea market to also occupy this area.

Historically, the front or south portion of the first floor was used as a showroom for automobiles. The southeast corner (and the second story) was enclosed and used for the auto parts department. The auto parts area remains intact as built. There is also a small, enclosed storage area near the southwest corner of the building. The remainder of the ground floor was used for servicing automobiles. The basement area appears to have been used for storing the inventory of vehicles that were for sale. There is also a flat-roofed brick garage bay built onto the northeast corner of the building that was used for washing the vehicles.

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The facade or south elevation of the building that faces West Yellowstone Highway is divided into five segments separated by prominent brick columns that extend through the projecting cornice and are capped with white terra cotta to contrast with the dark red colored brick. The end columns are larger and display a decorative brick and multi-colored terra cotta geometric design. The end columns also have a triangular-shaped decorative white terra cotta cap. The four inner columns each have twin rectangular-shaped recesses just below the level of the secondary cornice that once accommodated scrolled brackets (which have been removed). Two of the five segments of the facade are occupied by large wooden overhead garage doors. The remainder of the segments consist of glass display windows with two sets of 12-light glass clerestories above. The central segment of the facade is the largest and also contains two entrances with boarded up transoms. There is a third entrance with a covered transom in the east segment of the facade. Due to the imbalance this entrance creates in the overall symmetry, it may have been added at a later addition. Brick kickplates are located below the display windows. There is a projecting concrete water table that corresponds in height with the kickplate area and creates an even horizontal line across the width of the facade.

The brick facade has been painted white except for the kickplate area and the portions of the brick columns that extend above the projecting cornice. The projecting cornice is boxed in and has a red clay tile roof. The cornice was originally open and had scrolled brackets that extended down the brick columns and terra cotta decorative detailing between the brackets. There is a band of recessed signboard areas above the windows and garage bays that are now filled with hand painted signs advertising the flea market.

The west and east or long elevations of the building have a stepped parapet and five pairs of 20-light windows with metal sash spaced under each step of the parapet on the first floor. The last step of the parapet at the northeast end of the building is shorter and contains only one 20-light window. These windows continue along the first story of the north or rear elevation. The basement level is exposed on this elevation. There is a wooden overhead garage door that provides vehicular access to the basement, a wooden loading dock and corresponding door as well as window bays that have been covered or filled with cement blocks. Many of the window bays that are exposed in the west elevation at this level have also been filled with cement

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blocks. The remainder of the west elevation is covered and is occupied by an adjacent retail store. There is a sloped driveway running along the east elevation from the higher West Yellowstone Highway down to Industrial Street at the rear of the building.

The roof of the building is flat and has a wood deck supported by wooden joists and wooden trusses. It has a built-up roof covering and rolled roofing. There is a large skylight running down the center of the long elevation of the building that has been covered over for heat retention.

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8. Significance

The Casper Motor Company building, which currently houses the Yellowstone Flea Market, represents one of the earliest and largest car dealerships in Casper and Wyoming. It operated continuously as a car dealership and garage from 1918 to 1970, serving the Casper community and the surrounding region. It is therefore eligible under National Register Criterion A for its importance to the commerce of the city and region.

The architecture of the Casper Motor Company building also reflects the economic optimism and affluence brought about by the regional oil boom of the late 1910s and 1920s. The building facade still retains elements of the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style that was in vogue throughout America during this time period. It was also among the first buildings in Casper to be constructed using poured concrete walls. It is therefore also eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

The building was constructed in 1918 by Albert Majors and Benjamin Mueller. Majors and Mueller were successful sheep ranchers and businessmen who invested in various Casper commercial properties. The swampy conditions at this location necessitated the use of substantial poured concrete foundation walls. It originally housed the Casper Motor Company run by Benjamin B. Lummis. Lummis established the Casper Motor Company in 1916 and became the local agent for Buicks, Chalmers, and Marmons. It was located at 219 West Second Street at the corner of Second and David Streets. He also ran a complete repair shop. In August 1917, he announced the signing of a contract for a new garage due to the success of his business. It was to be one of the largest, if not the largest in the state. The Casper Record of August 28, 1917, stated that "...the new building, which will be of brick and reinforced concrete, will be practically fireproof in its construction, fitted with every modern improvement for handling, storing and caring for cars. It will be 140 feet by 140 feet, and will be located on Second Avenue (West Yellowstone), west of the Schulte blacksmith shop, will be two stories and a basement and with floor space sufficient to care for hundreds of cars".

A Sanborn Fire Map dated 1918 shows a building at this location labeled "Casper Auto Company," and depicts a large brick building with a capacity for 180 cars. There was a battery room in the northwest corner and Shop "B" in the rear. The building featured electric steam heat, a concrete floor, pier

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construction with 20-foot centers, and one row of wooden roof supports. A similar Sanborn Map dated 1921 showed two small stone additions on the rear elevation.

The structure was designed for and used as an auto dealership throughout its period of historical significance (1918 to 1943). Business directories show the Casper Motor Company at this address by 1920. In 1922, C.R. Peterson was president of the Casper Motor Company. It was briefly called the Kennedy Motor Company in 1923, carrying Wills Sainte Claire, Chalmers, and Maxwell motor cars. In 1924, it was once again called the Casper Motor Company, with George Campbell as president and E.M. Johnson, vice president and manager, specializing in Maxwells and Chryslers. In 1927-1928, B.B. Lummis moved the Casper Motor Company to 207 South Durbin Street, and 230 West Yellowstone became the home of Stebbin Motor Company, a Chrysler dealership, with G.B. Stebbins as president and W.J. Chamberlin as secretary-treasurer.

By 1930, B.B. Lummis had moved his business to 434 West Yellowstone. After fourteen years in the auto business, Lummis, who was an engineer and land surveyor, returned to that profession and later became City and County Engineer for Casper and Natrona County. Stebbins Motor Company remained at 230 Yellowstone through the mid-1930s, selling Chryslers and Plymouths. The building may have been vacant for a few years during the late Depression, as no businesses were listed from 1937 to 1939. A local business directory for 1940 listed the occupant as Murphy Motors, Inc. In the early 1940s, it was occupied by Chopping Motors, owned by Porter Chopping. By 1949, it was home to the Natrona Motor Company, a Ford dealership run by G.O. Housely, who had operated the same concern at North Center Street. It remained the Natrona Motor Company until 1960, when it became Spaniol Motors. The building is known to most Casper residents as Natrona Motors, and was used as a Ford dealership until about 1970, when the Ford dealer moved to a new location.

Other businesses that share a connection to this building include Yellowstone Airlines, which once had a ticket agency in the northwest corner. A sign for Yellowstone Airlines was found in this area by the current owner. Subsequent occupants included John Jourgensen Paints, which also occupied the adjacent building to the west. Jourgensen leased part of the building to AT&T, U.S. West, and an oil company for storage. The building was also leased for the storage of office furniture in the early 1980s, and then stood vacant until occupied by the flea market in June 1992.

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Casper's advantageous location as the nearest railhead to the Salt Creek Oil Field made it the center of economic activity related to the development of this important oil discovery. As a result, the major refineries and storage facilities were located in Casper, connected to the field via a system of pipelines, and the principal oil concerns also located their offices in Casper. The nearby Big Muddy Oil Field also began extensive commercial development in 1916, and Casper's role of an agricultural center was suddenly transformed to that of a financial and industrial hub of the oil industry in central Wyoming.

As a result of the oil boom, Casper experienced a period of unparalleled growth starting in 1913 and 1914 and continuing until the mid-1920s, when the inevitable decline began that led into the Great Depression. The population soared and the assessed valuation of property doubled and redoubled. The number of building permits rose from 574 in 1920 to 1,256 by 1923. Casper's business leaders promoted the role of the city as the center of the oil industry, and the city had spent twenty million dollars in civic improvements by the end of 1927.

By 1918, Casper had nine architectural firms vying for business, and the buildings constructed during this time period tend to reflect in their architecture the optimistic boomtown mentality of its citizens. Thus, the buildings were large, expensive, and adorned with numerous architectural embellishments. Rather than reflecting a Western or regional influence, Casper's architecture during the oil boom is more closely related to national building trends. Buildings were designed to appeal to the influx of newcomers to Casper connected with the oil industry rather than to the existing ranching community, reassuring the newcomers that Casper shared the values of other American cities.

The Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style elements of the Casper Motor Company building reflect the contemporary national vogue for this fashionable style that had its antecedents in the Spanish Colonial period and represented the builders' adaptation to climate and available materials in the American Southwest from about 1600-1840. Elements of the original facade with its red tile-roofed cornice and projecting dark red brick columns with contrasting white terra cotta caps, brackets, decorative detailing and signboard areas succeeded in conveying this architectural influence, while adapting it to the building's function as an auto showroom and garage with large display windows and overhead garage doors.

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Today the Casper Motor Company building retains good physical integrity with only minor exterior changes, and the interior also remains essentially the same as when built. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship; it therefore retains feeling and association with its period of historical significance as an important Casper commercial property from 1918 to 1943.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Adams, George, Telephonic Communication, Casper, WY., 5/5/93.

American Title Agency, Telephonic Communication, Casper, WY., 5/5/93.

"Ben Lummis Dies after Operation," The Casper Tribune-Herald,  
Casper, Wyoming, 6/3/1958.

Bingham, Blanche, Telephonic Communication, California, 4/25/93.

Casper and Natrona County Directories, 1929-1960.

First American Title Insurance Company, Telephonic Communication,  
Casper, WY., 5/5/93.

Haygood, Leroy, Telephonic Communication, Casper, 4/24/93, 5/5/93.

Jourgensen, John L., Telephonic Communication, Sun City, Arizona,  
5/5/93.

Leonard, Chuck, Personal Communication, Yellowstone Flea Market, 1/13/93.

Lummis, Doran, Telephonic Communication, Cheyenne, 4/25/93.

Property Records, Tax Assessor's Office, Natrona County Courthouse,  
Casper.

Sanborn Map Company, City of Casper, (Fire Insurance Maps), 1918, 1921.

"Wonderful Success of the Lummis Garage," The Casper Record, Casper,  
Wyoming, 8/28/1917.

Wyoming State Business Directories, 1917-1942. The Gazetteer Publishing  
and Printing Company.

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10. Geographical Data

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property is located at 230 West Yellowstone Highway on the north side of the street. It occupies Lots 2 and 3 and a strip in Block 67.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary is defined by the lots which the building occupies and its building lines.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

**NRIS Reference Number:** 94000042

**Date Listed:** 2/23/94

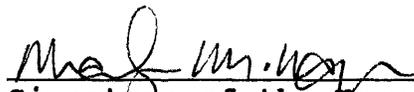
**Casper Motor Co./Natrona Motor Co.  
Property Name**

**Natrona  
County**

**WYOMING  
State**

**Multiple Name**

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

2/23/94  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
**Amended Items in Nomination:**

This nomination is amended to delete architecture as an area of significance (the property is not being nominated under Criterion C).

This change was confirmed by phone with the WY SHPO (2/23/94)

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)