

The Camera & Clipboard

Historical & Architectural Survey Newsletter



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RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY GUIDANCE

The Colorado Cultural Resources Survey Manual has always featured fewer 'musts' or 'shalls' for reconnaissance surveys than intensive surveys. Because a reconnaissance survey is a planning tool for follow-on intensive survey, staff have established fewer requirements in order to give communities the necessary freedom to plan a project according to their needs. Most reconnaissance surveys completed in the past gathered only the most basic locational data and did not assign individual site numbers. For that reason the results could not be entered into the SiteFiles database. Instead encoders simply made a notation of the general project area so any file search indicated the existence of a recon report.

When a reconnaissance survey covers a great deal of land and seems likely to identify a large number of resources, this approach may not be as useful. For example, with a countywide reconnaissance survey project the community may want the results entered into the database as each phase of the project is completed. Also, increasingly, grant applicants have asked for additional guidance for recording resources at the reconnaissance level. In response to this request OAHF staff have developed some standard advice.

Reconnaissance Survey Advice

In order to enter reconnaissance survey results into SiteFiles, the Information Management department requires the following data (minimum)

for each surveyed property. These nine items should appear on a separate page for each surveyed site.

1. Site number
2. Property name (if available), current and/ or historic
3. Property street address
4. Public Land Survey System (PLSS) details: Principal Meridian, Township, Range, Section, and four Quarter Sections
5. Photocopy of USGS map portion (7.5') depicting site location-- not enlarged or reduced
6. Count of buildings and/ or structures on site. For example, 1 house, 2 barns and 1 garage
7. Photographs: one of the main building or a site overview showing all buildings and/ or structures
8. Recorder details: Name, organization, address and phone number
9. Date of survey fieldwork

All reconnaissance projects do not necessarily need to be entered into the database, so it is a good idea to consult with staff when planning your survey. If encoding the results is appropriate, the list above will assure the proper information is gathered during the project.

Completing any survey takes time and money. Therefore, reconnaissance surveys should be undertaken only as and when needed. Reconnaissance surveys give you a prioritized plan for future intensive survey efforts and, in general, a community should reserve the majority of their resources for intensive survey.

The activity that is the subject of this material has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Historic Preservation Act, administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute an endorsement or recommendations by the Department of the Interior or the Society. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally-assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, Washington, D.C. 20240.

These activities are also partially funded by the State Historical Fund, a program of the Colorado Historical Society.

CONSISTENT ISSUES: FIELD 42 – STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

In the 2006 fiscal year staff reviewed over 2000 historical & architectural survey forms for grant-funded projects. While this review process highlighted various issues on numerous projects, some items arose again and again. As a service to *Camera & Clipboard* readers, articles related to the fields of the Architectural Inventory Form (#1403) most commonly featured in the consistent issues section of review memos will appear periodically in this newsletter. The first article is about the Statement of Significance.

The Statement of Significance represents one of the most critical sections of the survey form. This is where the factual information about the surveyed resource is synthesized and analyzed and the importance explained. In other words, the Statement of Significance not only tells why the surveyed resource is important but also answers the question, “So what?” The Statement of Significance should justify the choices ticked in Field 38, either making the case for individual National Register eligibility or explaining why the property does not possess sufficient significance to meet any of the eligibility criteria. A Statement of Significance should appear on each survey form and relate to the specific building being surveyed. Strong statements assist all users of the form-- allowing staff to evaluate potential eligibility, local communities to plan for future designation efforts and property owners to have a foundation for preparing a nomination.

Common mistakes and tips for improvement

While the review memos mentioned deficiencies with the Statements of Significance on submitted forms, the reasons why varied widely. The Field 42 narratives on many forms ***did not relate to the surveyed property***. This comment appeared most often where consultants either were resurveying an existing or had identified a potential National Register Historic District. Keep in mind the Statement of Significance should apply to the surveyed resource, not the neighborhood, town or district where it is located (although it is okay to mention contributing/ noncontributing status within a potential district as appropriate). Most individuals consulting the inventory form are only interested in the surveyed resource. So, including mostly comments about the surveyed property allows them to access the information they need. Then, if they either require further information or reading the individual inventory form piques their interest, they can always refer to the survey report for further details.

TIP: If you are struggling with writing a Statement of Significance related directly to the individual property, refer specifically to the applicable National Register eligibility criteria (A-D in Field 38). For example: “The surveyed building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Education. The schoolhouse served as the education center of the community from 1895 to 1929.”

Other forms featured Statements of Significance ***lacking in detail***. For example, narratives for properties where Criterion C- Architecture was ticked in Field 38 often included standard language about the architectural style or building type, but few specifics. One form asserted, “In architecture, this building is significant as a good example of a Craftsman bungalow.” A Statement of Significance should include more than just a basic declaration. Strong statements for properties field eligible for Criterion C answer (at least) two questions: 1) What characteristics of the style or type does the resource possess? and 2) How does the surveyed property compare with others in the neighborhood? The Field 42 narrative is not expected to be as detailed as the information presented in a National Register nomination, yet it should state the basic reasoning to be pursued in the nomination.

TIP: When writing Statements of Significance it may help to remember the word “because” since this term provides a perfect lead-in for elaboration. To address the second question, a brief explanation of how the surveyed resource is one of the largest, most elaborate, only, excellent or best remaining example offers the level of comparison required. Based upon the advice provided, a stronger Statement of Significance would be: “This building is significant as a good example of a Craftsman bungalow because it possesses exposed rafter ends, knee braces at the eaves, battered porch columns, overhanging eaves

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STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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and false half-timbering. In addition, this home is the most intact and one of the last remaining Craftsman bungalows in the survey area.”

Writing Statements of Significance for resources field assessed as not individually eligible to the National Register is particularly challenging. On the reviewed forms many of these either were **written in the negative** (declaring what the property is not, such as, “This site lacks significant associations with past persons or events and lacks significant distinguishing characteristics or style”) or were **not definitive enough**.

TIP: To avoid negative statements it is acceptable to refer to the surveyed resource as typical, representative or one of many; in such cases the building likely will not be individually eligible but may indicate a larger body of similar resources and, therefore, district potential. Users of the forms also appreciate Statements of Significance which express an opinion regarding eligibility. Keep in mind the narrative should agree with responses in Field 43, 44 and elsewhere on the form-- it is confusing to read a form with no mention of alterations in Field 29, a well-documented history in Field 35, criteria ticked in Field 38, a seemingly favorable Statement of Significance and assessment of integrity only to have Field 44 marked as “Not Eligible.” This Statement of Significance is both positive and definitive: “This resource is a typical building style in the surveyed neighborhood. The shallow gable roof, recessed porch and numerous additions to the back of the property make this building similar to many of the nearby homes. The building does not possess sufficient significance to be individually eligible to the National Register; however it would be a contributing resource in a potential historic district.”

Hopefully, this article will assist in developing stronger Statements of Significance. If you have a question about preparing Statements of Significance or any other aspect of historical & architectural survey, don't hesitate to 'Ask Les' (see page 7)-- he loves to receive mail.

CLARIFICATION REGARDING LABELS

One of our eagle-eyed readers spotted something in Issue Number 12 of the *Camera & Clipboard* which did not seem to make sense. He emailed to ask about the revisions to the survey manual. Specifically, he was interested in the section of the article about processing photographs. The text summarizing the changes to the survey manual seemed to imply OAHF now *required* pencil labeling for all historical & architectural survey photographs and labels were no longer acceptable. That is **not** the case. For clarification, a complete excerpt from the relevant portion of the June 2006 revised survey manual appears below.

Labeling photographs on the back with a blunt, very soft lead (#6 or higher) or grease pencil is the only truly archival technique. For survey projects involving more than a handful of properties, pencil labeling is generally time prohibitive. In those cases, acid-free 'archival' labels, available from archival product suppliers, may be used on survey photographs. The best type is foil-backed, as these will prevent ink migration. Do not use mailing labels from an office supply store, as these are not archival quality. Contact OAHF if you have difficulty finding appropriate labels (303-866-3392).

Hopefully, after reading the entire passage above, you can see the revised survey manual has just clarified the type of pencil (#6 or higher lead or grease) which may be used, not required the use of pencil instead of computer-generated labels. Labeling either with the accepted types of pencils or archival computer-generated labels *both* represent acceptable options. Nearly a dozen sets of eyes had a chance to review the survey manual and summary page of changes, yet none of us caught this potentially confusing language.

Read something in the *Camera & Clipboard* or any other OAHF document which seems unclear or contradictory? If so, please contact a member of staff so we can address the issue and make changes to our publications as necessary.



ARCHITECT BIOGRAPHY

By Chris Geddes

JAMES M. HUNTER (1908-1983)

James M. Hunter-- prominent Boulder architect and Fellow, American Institute of Architects-- was born in 1908 in Omaha, Nebraska. Hunter studied architectural engineering at Iowa State University and received his degree from the University of Illinois in 1936. That same year he came to Boulder to work as a draftsman for Glen H. Huntington. By 1940, Harold Stuart Jones had joined the same company and the firm Huntington, Jones and Hunter was born. This firm remained active until 1945. They designed a number of buildings in that short time, including the Citizens National Bank Building in Boulder as well as a number of houses in Floral Park, a Boulder subdivision.

After service in World War II, Hunter formed his own Boulder-based firm. As firm principal he worked on numerous academic complexes. Hunter served as planner and architect for Colorado A & M College (now Colorado State University), Fort Collins; Fort Lewis College, Durango; Regis College, Denver and Tarkio College in Missouri. Hunter also was a member of the advisory board of local (Boulder) architects who helped establish an accredited degree program in Architecture at the University of Colorado at Boulder. This new major was approved in 1949. In honor of Hunter's contributions both to education and to architecture, the AIA Colorado chapter established the James M. Hunter Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded for graduate study or travel within the continental United States specifically for the study of American architecture.

Hunter designed many civic, commercial, organizational, educational, and residential buildings in Boulder. Key commissions included the original Boulder Public Library, Baseline Junior High School, Boulder Medical Center, the Nelson House and the Boulder Municipal Building. In addition to his practice, Hunter was interested in architectural research, especially solar design. He was highly regarded for his early efforts to use active solar design in his architecture. He served as a consultant on the utilization of solar energy and was a member of the advisory board for the Association of Applied Solar Energy. In collaboration with George Löff, a noted authority on active solar design, Hunter designed residences for Löff in Boulder in 1949 and in Denver (Cherry Hills Village) in the 1950s. The Nelson House in Boulder embodies many of the principles of solar design-- in this case, passive as opposed to active solar design. Further research is needed in order to better understand Hunter's contributions to solar design and his role in the then-new technology.

Hunter retired from practice in 1973. He died at the age of 75 in 1983 at his home in Boulder. He is interred at Danforth Chapel on the campus at Colorado State University, a building of his own design.

For details about James M. Hunter and other Colorado architects see:

www.coloradohistory-oahp.org/guides/architects/architectindex.htm



James M. Hunter designed the Danforth Chapel at Fort Lewis College in Durango in 1959. This building is not to be confused with the Danforth Chapel at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, another Hunter commission.

Danforth Chapels appear on numerous college and university campuses across the United States. The Danforth Foundation-- a national educational philanthropy established by William Danforth, the founder of the Ralston Purina Company-- donated funds for meditation chapels on campuses and in hospitals. By the time he died in 1955, Danforth had financed the construction of 24 chapels named in his honor.

Source: Denver Public Library



NEW ARCHITECTURAL STYLES / TYPES ADDED TO LEXICON

Architecture of the WPA in Eastern Colorado

The primary goal of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), one of many 1930s New Deal relief and recovery programs, was to put people to work. Projects in the eastern plains counties were designed so that a majority of the funds went to labor, not materials. Additionally, powered machinery was not favored as this resulted in fewer men being hired. Therefore, WPA buildings and structures in the eastern part of the state are marked by a high degree of craftsmanship, albeit untrained, provided by primarily unskilled labor. Many men developed skills as projects progressed. The quality of masonry work varies widely, undoubtedly reflecting not only different teams of workers, but also the growing skills gained by the men.

The use of local materials in order to keep costs low is another hallmark of WPA projects. This resulted in some similarities of appearance within a region. In southeastern Colorado, where construction rock was plentiful, several notable projects illustrate a variety of masonry techniques. Adobe brick, another inexpensive material, was often used in areas of Colorado with Hispanic heritage. If stone was not readily available, monolithic concrete construction was an inexpensive alternative. Concrete had the added advantage of requiring the least amount of skilled labor. Sometimes eastern Colorado projects utilized buildings materials salvaged from demolished structures.

WPA projects in eastern Colorado were simply designed, often by the local sponsor or occasionally by the regional WPA engineer. In some instances, this led to uniformity in design, such as the number of similar concrete gymnasiums in the east-central Colorado district; these buildings contrasted with the quarried stone gymnasiums in the Baca-Kiowa-Prowers WPA sub-district. The building styles were influenced either by local traditions or were based on the contemporary Art Deco, Moderne and Modernist architectural styles.

Four architectural style sub-types are associated with WPA projects in eastern Colorado-- WPA Art Deco, WPA Moderne, WPA Modernist and WPA Rustic. The first three are discussed below. WPA Rustic will be introduced in the next issue of *The Camera & Clipboard*.

WPA Art Deco

The favored contemporary style during the Depression years was *Art Deco*, which represented a complete break with the traditional designs of previous decades. Popular during the 1930s and 1940s, it is characterized by flat roofs with uneven cornice lines, stepped or set-back facades, a strong vertical emphasis and polychromatic materials. Stylized relief ornamentation was generally geometric and included chevrons, zigzag and geometric floral designs. In Art Deco examples built by federal relief programs, the stylistic details and form of the buildings are usually simple and restrained.



The Sedgwick County Courthouse exhibits the vertical orientation and simple ornamentation representative of WPA Art Deco. Source: Denver Public Library.

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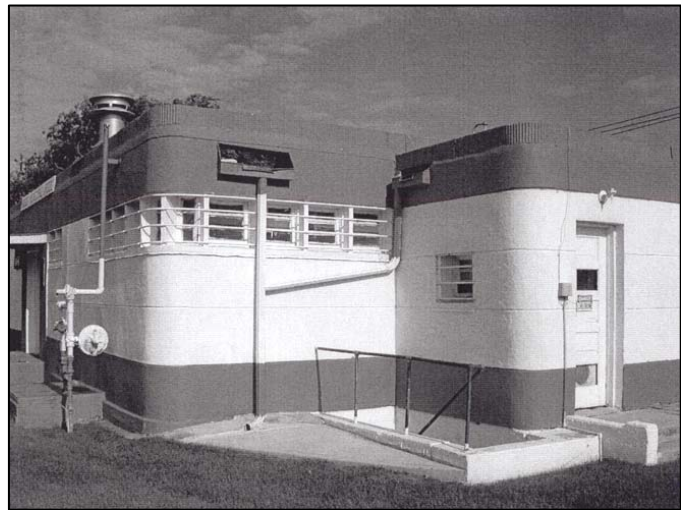
WPA Moderne

Moderne, also referred to as Art Moderne, is similar to the Art Deco style. It also emphasized a modern or futuristic appearance. Unlike the Art Deco style, it often lacked ornamentation and featured a horizontal orientation. As applied to the WPA buildings of eastern Colorado, the character-defining features include flat or barrel roofs, smooth exterior surfaces, vertical or horizontal fenestration openings and linear building elements. Although horizontal lines are more typical of the Moderne style across the country, WPA Moderne buildings often feature grooved bands in an otherwise smooth concrete exterior surface. Rounded corners are also common. WPA Moderne buildings differ from other examples of this general style in that they tend to be hand constructed rather than machine-tooled. Metal details are rare except in the window frames. Windows typically are “stock” and not specifically designed for the building.

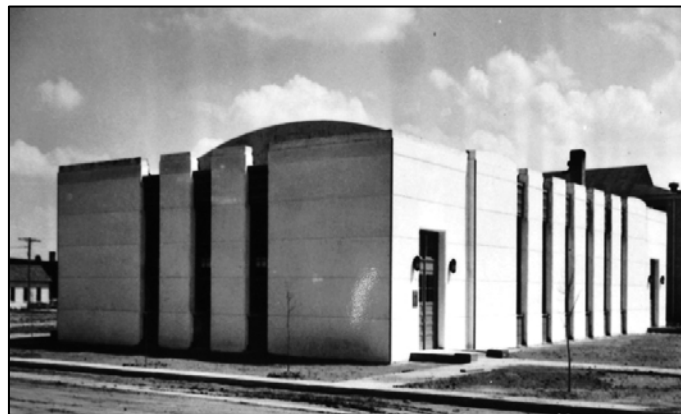
WPA Modernist

Modernist WPA designs reflect an attempt to keep building forms simple more than an expression of an overall design philosophy. Many of the defining characteristics of WPA Moderne are found in WPA Modernist buildings, including the lack of ornamentation, flat or barrel roofs, smooth exterior surfaces, vertical fenestration openings and linear building elements. These buildings often include vertical elements in conjunction with horizontal features. Vertical elements include tall narrow window openings that often terminate in a stepped parapet at the main elevation. Windows are often grouped in tall vertical sections to present a modern appearance. Where the Moderne is characterized by a horizontal or streamline effect with rounded edges and corners, Modernist buildings feature square corners. As in the WPA Moderne examples, hand construction is favored over the machine-tooled. Stone masonry involves rectangular, smooth-faced blocks with regular, usually sawed, edges.

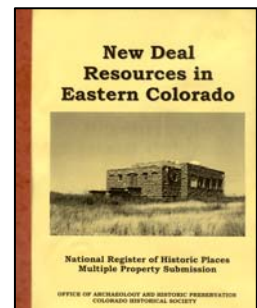
For further information about the architecture and history of the New Deal in eastern Colorado, see the National Register multiple property document, *New Deal Resources in Eastern Colorado*, a publication available from the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.



The Bath House at the Hugo Swimming Pool features the rounded corners and horizontal orientation of WPA Moderne. Source: State Historical Fund, Colorado Historical Society.



The Hugo Gymnasium exhibits the simple lines and window treatment typical of WPA Modernist design. Source: National Records & Archives Administration.





**ASK THE
STAFF
by Les S.
Moore**

Dear Les,
I am hoping you can settle a disagreement between my client and me. She says a sample draft form should be absolutely complete while I define a draft as a work in progress and believe blanks or missing information are acceptable. Who's right?
**Sincerely,
Conflicted Consultant in
Conifer**

Dear Conflicted,
Perhaps emphasis should be on the 'sample' instead of the 'draft.' Staff want to receive products which represent samples of what the completed forms are likely to look like. For the sample draft review to be truly effective, consultants must turn in complete forms. This means no blank fields and all required attachments (sketch map, USGS map and photographs). Leaving blanks or failing to include all of the components creates challenges during the review and usually requires the consultant to resubmit his or her work. For example, it is very difficult to verify the locational information without the required USGS map. Similarly, it is often challenging to check the information in Fields 20 and 21 without images showing all elevations of the building or all buildings and structures on the surveyed site. While it is acceptable to submit photocopies of images with the sample draft forms, a thorough review requires multiple views.

The purpose of sample draft form review is to identify issues before all of the survey forms have been completed. Then the consultant knows which corrections are necessary on all of the forms early enough in the project to avoid having to change each and every form. On particularly large projects this review can save considerable time, effort and resources. But, if staff cannot review complete samples, there is always the potential for more revisions when the project is up against its final deadline.

Remember you do not need to wait for a formal review for input on your survey project. You and your client should call or email staff with questions as they arise. That's why we are here.

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