

## TOUR OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, MARKERS AND MONUMENTS

### A. 1002 East "L" Street

A unique "rammed earth" construction, the North Casper Clubhouse was built in 1938-1939 by the National Youth Administration as a community center. Rammed earth structures are formed by laying a concrete foundation then compressing earth to form walls. Once the frame of the building is together, the compacted earth is covered with stucco.

The North Casper Clubhouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in February 1994.

### B. 818 East 2nd Street

The Marvin L. Bishop home is the first multi-story brick home constructed in Casper. It was designed after Mr. Bishop's childhood home in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. Constructed in 1907, design elements include a widow's walk, a full width exposed porch with Tuscan columns, and a central hallway that continues from the entrance of the house to the back porch. Mr. Bishop was appointed Postmaster for Casper in 1892. Upon resignation, he entered into sheep ranching and became a prominent sheep rancher in the community. He founded the Natrona County Woolgrowers Association and was instrumental in establishing a series of stock drives and rest stations for livestock in Natrona County.

The Bishop Home was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March 2001.



Frank Schulte, Casper College Western History Center



Ruth Scott Hocker Collection, Casper College Western History Center

### C. 360 North Wolcott Street

The Burlington Railroad arrived in Casper on October 20, 1913. Its arrival was unusual, as it came from the west, not the east. The Burlington-Northern Railroad Depot was built in 1916. During World War I a trainload of gasoline was shipped every hour for the war effort.

### D. 421 South Center Street

The Title Guaranty Building sits on the site of Casper's first oil refinery.

### E. 624 South Center

Saint Anthony's, the first Catholic Church in Casper, was located at the southeast corner of 1st and Center Streets in 1898. The present structure was dedicated in 1920.

A priest of St. Anthony's Church, Father John Mullin, came to Casper in 1915. During a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) activity in town, Father Mullin became agitated at the gathering near his parish and told the KKK to carry on its business away from his church. Not long afterwards, Mullin, with the help of others obtained a list of Casper businessmen who dealt with the KKK. By boycotting and shunning these men, Casper was successfully rid of the KKK.

St. Anthony's Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1997.



Photo by Tom Carrigan (DeLuse Studio), Frances Seely Webb Collection, Casper College Western History Center



Ruth Scott Hocker Collection, Casper College Western History Center

### F. 108 East 7th

In 1921, during a boom in the oil economy, the Elks enlisted the architectural firm of Garbutt and Weidner to design a lodge hall. Its massive, tastefully decorated appearance confirms the expense and attention to detail put into its design. The building was finished in 1936 after the Elks Lodge recovered from the Great Depression.

The Elks Lodge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1997.

### **G. 136 East 6th Street**

This red brick Georgian-style building was known as the Casper Women's Clubhouse. The edifice has terra cotta rosettes on each window, terra cotta flower boxes and ornamental moldings. The interior has lovely woodwork and iron railings. Constructed in 1920 by the Midwest Oil Company at a cost of \$65,000, the building served as a hotel/living quarters for its male employees and male guests. Ironically, in 1939 several women's groups combined to purchase the building for \$8,000. The building is presently a private residence.

The Midwest Oil Company/Casper Women's Clubhouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in November 1983.

### **H. 930 South Elm Street**

Natrona County High School was completed in 1927. Designed in the traditional Gothic Collegiate style, it is three-stories with terra cotta ornamentation. The dramatic entry tower is the focal point of the facade with a two-story bay window and castellated appearance. The main entry has the words "Natrona County High School" inscribed in medieval script. Reminiscent of a European castle, there are turrets, finials and other innumerable embellishments of terra cotta.

Although Natrona County High School became a source of community pride, the citizens of Casper believed it was overly extravagant and did not reelect any of the school board members who had voted for the elaborate project.

Natrona County High School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in January 1994.



Photo by Chuck Morrison, Frances Seely Webb Collection, Casper College Western History Center

### **I. 815 S. Grant Street**

Grant Street Grocery and Market has been a family-owned grocery and meat market in the same location since 1918. Over the years, it has kept its family atmosphere, even during times of stressful economic conditions and change of ownership. Each successive owner has maintained a tradition by making this store an essential and integral part of both the immediate neighborhood and the wider community for 88 years. This tradition has made the store the sole surviving neighborhood grocery store (there were sixty of these neighborhood stores in Casper in 1923).

As of this printing, Grant Street Grocery and Market has been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places, and is pending final review.

### **J. 140 East "K" Street**

The style of Roosevelt School, a central block with wings, represents an architectural style basic for institutional structures of the time. Roosevelt School was built in 1921 in response to an increase in population and demand for schools.

The North Casper District was for the most part, a district of small homes, meager means and large families. The new school with showers and a kitchenette for the children and a rest room for the teachers became a community center and a first step in revitalization of the community. School personnel and volunteers provided special care for the children's health, made home visits, distributed clothing and had a successful vaccination program.

Roosevelt School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 1997.



Frances Seely Webb Collection, Casper College Western History Center

### **K. St. Marks Episcopal Church at the Central Wyoming Fairgrounds**

The little white chapel was once located at the northeast corner of 2nd and Wolcott. Constructed in 1891, it was Casper's first church. When its patronage outgrew this structure, it was used as a parish home. In 1954 it was moved to the Fairgrounds and was used as a museum for pioneer artifacts until 1990.

### **L. Reshaw's (Richards) Bridge**

Turn off U.S. 20-26 north onto Curtis Street and follow to the river where the town of Evansville maintains the Reshaw Bridge Park. Remnants of the bridge can be found at Fort Caspar.

The site of a wooden toll bridge, built by John Richard (Reshaw), was in use from 1852-1865. It serviced emigrant trains and other travelers along the Oregon, Mormon, and California Trails. Three military forts also occupied the site: Fort Clay, Camp Davis and Post at Platte Bridge, informally called Camp Payne. The bridge was dismantled during the winter of 1865-66 for use at Fort Caspar.

### **M. Mormon Ferry**

Turn west off North Beverly Street onto Bryan-Evansville Road. An interpretive sign is located in the North Casper Park complex directly north of the baseball field closest to the river.

The Mormon Ferry was built to assist travelers in crossing the North Platte River. The ferryboat consisted of two 30 foot long cottonwood logs covered with planks to carry wagons. The ferry operated at different locations from 1847 to 1851. No traces of the crossing remain at the park. The original crossing and a replica of the ferry are at Fort Caspar.

#### **N. Child's Route**

Turn east off North Poplar Street into Crossroads Park. Follow the road east into a large parking lot where the Platte River Parkway is located. Follow the signs along the parkway which will direct you to a segment of the Child's Route. A portion of the historic trails was named for Andrew Child who published a guidebook that showed a route of the Oregon Trail on the north side of the North Platte River.

The walk will take at least one hour to complete. Along the parkway are two interpretive signs, an overlook of the North Platte River Valley, an interpretive map of the national historic trails through Casper, and an opportunity to walk a short segment of the Child's Route.

#### **O. Fort Caspar**

The site is located at 4001 Fort Caspar Road immediately south of the North Platte River adjacent to Wyoming Boulevard SW.

During the year 1859, Louis Guinard built a toll bridge and trading post at the site later to be known as Fort Caspar. The site also served as a relay station for the Pony Express and the Transcontinental Telegraph. In 1862, Union troops occupied the site and named the post Platte Bridge Station. The name was changed to Fort Caspar in 1865 following the death of Lt. Caspar W. Collins in the Battle of Platte Bridge. The army closed the post in 1867. Today the site contains a reconstruction of the 1865 fort, a museum and an extensive bookstore.

Fort Caspar was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in August 1971.

#### **P. National Historic Trails Interpretive Center**

Located at 1501 North Poplar Street on a sand dune bluff overlooking the city and valley of the North Platte River, the Center interprets the story of the emigrants traveling along the Oregon, Mormon, California and Pony Express Trails in the 1800s. The Center also interprets the Native American lifeways of the area as well as the regional Bozeman and Bridger Trails. The Center features life-sized interactive exhibits.

#### **Q. Oregon/Mormon/California/Pony Express National Historic Trails**

The approximate route of these national historic trails can be followed west of Casper. For further information and directions please contact the Fort Caspar Museum.



Casper Area Chamber of Commerce Collection, Casper College Western History Center

#### **R. Casper Army Air Base**

The Casper Army Air Base is located approximately eight miles Northwest of Casper via U.S. Route 20-26 at the Natrona County Airport.

The Casper Army Air Base was a major military facility constructed in April 1942 and covers 2,902 acres. By the end of 1942, personnel numbered 3,327. Approximately 400 buildings were constructed of which 100 are still intact. The Air Base was deactivated in March 1945. A museum located in the Serviceman's Club commemorating Veterans from all wars and all branches of service opened in 2002. This building contains an outstanding collection of murals depicting the history of Wyoming that were drawn on the interior walls by enlisted army personnel.

The Casper Army Air Base was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in August 2001.

#### **S. "Old Yellowstone District"**

A large area immediately West of downtown Casper, between David and Poplar Streets, and First Street and Collins Avenue, the Old Yellowstone District (OYD) represents what could be described as a "warehouse district." Originally next to the railroad, warehouses and businesses sprang up to serve the agricultural industry. Noland Feed located at 268 Industrial Avenue has been in operation since 1918.

As the automobile gained popularity, the businesses in the OYD catered directly to the needs of the car, and the travelers along the original Yellowstone Highway. The Tripeny Motor Company at 355 W. Yellowstone began in the 1930's, selling Desotos and Cushmans. At 400 West Yellowstone is A-1 Used Tire, Originally Wyatt Service Station. George Wyatt began the service station in 1920 after losing his sheep business to the harsh winters of Wyoming. George and his brothers, Henry and A.H. Cheshire, and other family members continued to operate the business until it was sold in 1996, when it became a tire shop.

In 2007-2008, the Old Yellowstone District was the subject of an extensive redevelopment plan with the goal to revitalize the area.

