

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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### 1. Name of Property

historic name: Storey Gymnasium

other names/site number: Cheyenne High School Gymnasium/48LA2801

### 2. Location

street & number: 2811 House Avenue

city or town: Cheyenne

state: Wyoming

code: 56

county: Laramie

code: 021

not for publication: N/A

vicinity: N/A

zip code: 82001

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.)

Claudia Wisotzky \_\_\_\_\_ 5/1/05  
Signature of certifying official Date

SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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



**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: education-related - gymnasium

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: education-related - gymnasium

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Other  
Sub: Modern

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: concrete  
roof : built up tar and gravel  
walls: brick  
other: terra cotta

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

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

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- 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)

- Cat. Education
- Cat. Architecture

Period of Significance: 1950-1954

Significant Dates: 1950 (building date)

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder: Porter and Bradley, architects/Loren Hancock, builder

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

(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: City of Cheyenne Planning Office, Cheyenne, WY.

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: ca. 2.5 acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>515271</u>	<u>4554685</u>

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

All of Block 14, Original City of Cheyenne

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

The boundary is the block which the property occupies and includes the main structure, landscaping, and any parking areas.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian  
organization: Rosenberg Historical Consultants  
street & number: 739 Crow Creek Road  
city or town: Cheyenne state: WY

date: 8/31/2004; revised 12/31/2004  
telephone: (307)-632-1144  
zip code: 82009

**Property Owner**

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

name: Laramie County School District No. 1  
street & number: 2801 House Avenue  
city or town: Cheyenne  
state: WY zip code: 82001  
telephone: (307)771-2100

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**STOREY GYMNASIUM  
LARAMIE COUNTY, WYOMING**

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### 7. Description

Storey Gymnasium is located at 2811 House Avenue in a residential neighborhood in the northern portion of the City of Cheyenne, Wyoming. It is part of a 6.58-acre complex that includes the original Cheyenne High School (now Laramie County School District No. 1) and the Gibson Clark school building. The facade or west side fronts on an open landscaped area that was formerly occupied by House Avenue. The Administration Building for Laramie County School District No. 1 faces Storey Gymnasium on the west side of the open green. There is a triangular-shaped parking lot on the north side of the gym along Pershing Boulevard, parking in the rear or east side along Evans Avenue, and additional parking on the south side along West 28<sup>th</sup> Street. Storey Gymnasium was constructed in 1950 and originally served as an athletic facility for the adjacent Cheyenne (Central) High School.

This is a tall two-story red brick building with one-story components (overall dimensions: 180 feet east-west by 240 feet north-south). It rests on a concrete foundation with a partial basement. The walls are constructed with cinder blocks with brick facing. It has a flat roof with a low terra cotta-capped brick parapet. This component is lighted by regularly-spaced, multiple-glass block panels set high in the walls. The brick walls are accented by several evenly-spaced rows of protruding horizontal brick bands. The interior of the second story of the gymnasium also has an upper mezzanine level. The two-story portion is surrounded on three sides (minus the south side) by one-story, flat-roofed brick components that house classrooms, offices, and locker rooms. These also have low terra cotta-capped brick parapets and a terra cotta band delineating the water table. The bricks below this line are a darker shade of red.

The main entrance is centered in the west side and has a flat-roofed enclosed entry with three sets of three two-light twin-leaf steel doors with transoms. The walls flanking the doors are canted, and the entrance is protected by a flat-roofed canopy. Ground level windows consist of four-light units with steel frames. The one-story component on the north side of the structure has a flat roof and regularly-spaced brick pilasters capped with concrete. The intervening bays contain multi-light glass block windows, each with a functioning one-light window in its lower portion. There are also three single pedestrian steel doors in this side. The south side of the building does not have a one-story component. In addition to the windows set high in the wall for the gymnasium, there is a row of small regularly-spaced two-light windows with steel frames just above the first floor level. There are regularly-spaced brick-filled indentations encircling the first floor level. The east side or rear of the building has a tall rectangular exterior brick chimney and one-story flat-roofed components. A taller, flat-roofed central component encloses a stage area. There is a pair of twin-leaf steel doors with transoms in the south component, two single pedestrian steel doors in the central component, and an overhead garage door in the north component. Windows on the east side are a combination of glass blocks and four-light units with steel frames.

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The main entrance on the west side consists of twin-leaf steel fire doors with sets of wooden interior twin-leaf doors. Dark red tile covers the floor in the intervening space. The interior has a large foyer inside the main entrance with a terrazzo tile floor with a built-in mosaic for Central High School (1960) and East High School (1965), which currently share the facility. The foyer also contains several wood and glass trophy cases. Walls in the foyer and on the first and second floor are finished with green tile below and brick above. Several sets of twin-leaf doors lead into the gymnasium proper. The central portion consists of a hardwood basketball floor with tiered wooden bleacher seating built onto concrete tiers on the north and south sides extending through the second story. Folding wooden bleacher units can also be pulled out on the floor level. The roof of the gymnasium is open with exposed steel trusses. Natural lighting is provided by numerous glass block windows set high in the walls. The interior walls of the gymnasium are finished in beige tile with cement block above. There is a press box located on the upper level on the south side.

Storey Gymnasium retains excellent physical integrity with few exterior or interior modifications since its construction. Therefore, it retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.



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### 8. Significance

Storey Gymnasium is eligible under National Register Criterion A for its direct association with the growth of education in Cheyenne. It was constructed in 1950 and is a unique example of educational school architecture adapted to a specific purpose, that is, a separate physical education facility detached from Central High School, with which it was associated. It represents the efforts of twentieth century educational reformers to incorporate a program of physical education and athletics as an important part of the school curriculum. In addition to its use as a gymnasium, it housed a ROTC facility with classrooms, drill hall, rifle range, and armory, as well as wood shops and music instructional facilities. The gymnasium was shared by East High School after it was constructed in 1959 and by the new Central High School after 1978. The adjacent Cheyenne High School was then closed and used for administrative offices. Storey Gymnasium continues to serve the larger Cheyenne community for sporting events, graduations, annual city-wide youth concerts, and other educational and public events.

It is also eligible under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture as the work of a master architect, Frederick Hutchinson Porter, prominent Cheyenne architect who designed many of the city's most important public and commercial buildings. Storey Gymnasium is a substantial brick masonry structure built with community pride and permanency in mind.

#### Historic background

Public education was a primary concern of Cheyenne's citizens from its beginnings in 1867-68 as a "track town" along the first transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific. The Territory of Wyoming was created in 1868, and Cheyenne was designated the temporary territorial capital. Cheyenne had the largest population of any city in the territory, and once designated as the seat of government, this position was vehemently defended by its residents. From about 1875 to 1887, Cheyenne enjoyed a boom period based largely on cattle ranching. Spectacular profits were made during the 1880s, and by 1884, the population of Cheyenne had soared to 7,000. It had evolved from a rough-hewn railroad town to a modern city. Cheyenne became the state capital when Wyoming won statehood in 1890.

As early as October 1867, the local paper encouraged the development of a school for the 120 to 125 school-age children residing in Cheyenne. The City Council appointed a committee to arrange for a school building, and the first public school in Wyoming was constructed in late 1867. School District No. 1 was organized in November 1868, and covered an area of 270 square miles and included six rural schools. By 1874, the Cheyenne school had an enrollment of 131.

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The post-World War I years saw the construction of some of Cheyenne's finest remaining schools. Architect William Dubois designed several schools at this time, including the new Cheyenne High School and Gibson Clark School in about 1921. Frederick Hutchinson Porter designed the Park Addition School, also in 1921. Dubois designed the Johnson Public School on the South Side in 1923 and, in collaboration with Porter, the elegant Lulu McCormick Junior High School in 1929.

Cheyenne, like the rest of America, sank into the Great Depression in the late 1920s through the 1930s. Only two schools were constructed during this era. The Corlett School, designed by Dubois, was built in 1940 on the west side of Cheyenne, and the Mabel Fincher School, designed by Porter, was also built in 1940 in what was then the northeast part of town.

World War II and the resulting war buildup rescued the American economy from the Great Depression. Fort D.A. Russell (renamed Fort Francis E. Warren) was chosen as the location of a Quartermaster Replacement Center, which had a tremendous positive impact on Cheyenne's economy. Although school construction was suspended during the war years, building resumed in the mid-1940s.

Schools constructed during the post-World War II expansion program utilized modern architectural styles that abandoned traditional form and detail. The low clean lines, flat roofs, and banks of windows were somewhat reminiscent of elements of the earlier Streamline Moderne and International styles. Utility and cost were the two dominant factors in terms of design. As a result, the schools built between 1945 and 1950 are very similar, and many were designed by the same architects. Schools constructed during this time period included Deming, Hebard, and Rossman Schools.

Storey Gymnasium was constructed in 1950-52 to fill the city's need for better high school athletic facilities. A \$250,000 bond issue was passed by the voters of Cheyenne in 1949 for the new gymnasium. The architectural firm of Porter and Bradley designed the building, and it was constructed by Loren Hancock. The final cost of the two-story, flat-roofed red brick building was \$646,611.66. It was named in honor of William Storey who served on the Board of Trustees from 1903 to 1911. It was located directly east of Cheyenne High School, and the street between the two buildings was closed off after the gym was completed. At the time of its completion, it held one of the largest seating capacities for high school basketball in the region. In addition to the basketball arena located in the center of the two-story segment, the building included flat-roofed one-story components containing classrooms, offices, and locker rooms. Facilities included a ROTC department consisting of classrooms, drill hall, rifle range, and armory. It also contained rooms for wood shops and the instructional music program.

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The Storey Gymnasium first served Cheyenne (Central) High School, then was used jointly by East and Central after those individual high schools were constructed in 1959 and 1978 respectively. It is still used as a gymnasium and for other school events including the annual city-wide youth music concerts, graduations, science fairs, and other educational and civic affairs and events. In its post-historic period of significance, it hosted politicians of national importance, such as Ronald Reagan. As a sporting facility, it will be replaced when individual gymnasiums are built at Central and East High Schools in the near future.

The architect, Frederick H. Porter was born on July 9, 1890, in Salem, Massachusetts. Although his formal education did not continue past eighth grade, he did attend the Wentworth Institute, a technical institute in Boston. He also attended the Architectural Club Ateliers in Saint Louis and Boston. He practiced architecture from October 1906 to about 1965.

In 1906, "Bunk" Porter began an apprenticeship in the Denver Architect's Office. He came to Cheyenne in 1911 as an inspector for the construction of the Boyd Building (at that time the Citizen's National Bank). He established the architectural firm of Baerresen and Porter in about 1920; within two years he had set up an independent practice. In 1944, he went into partnership with Walter Bradley, a collaboration that lasted until about 1954, when Bradley retired. In 1956, Porter went into partnership with his son, Fred Porter, Jr. and practiced as Porter and Porter. F.H. Porter retired in 1965.

For over forty years, Porter designed buildings that helped establish the tone of Cheyenne's architecture. His buildings included schools, churches, and public buildings. His first building in Cheyenne was the First Presbyterian Church (considered by him to be the "best job" he ever did), and the last was the O'Mahoney Federal Center. In between, he designed dozens of buildings throughout Wyoming and on the campus of the University of Wyoming in Laramie.

Porter's evolution of architectural styles is evident in his design of schools through the years. His first in Cheyenne (1921) was the Park Addition School using a style (Craftsman/Prairie influences) unique among the remaining Cheyenne schools. His next school was a collaboration in 1929 with the established William Dubois in the design of McCormick Junior High School, a richly decorative and elaborate example of Collegiate Gothic. In the 1940s, Porter's designs evolved to keep up with the "Modern" movement. In 1940 and 1945, Porter designed the Mable Fincher and Deming Elementary Schools, both of which featured Art Deco and International elements, with clean sweeping lines and simple detailing.

The Hebard and Rossman Schools (mid-1940s), designed by the partnership of Porter and Bradley, also reflected the evolution of post-World War II architecture and featured Modern and International elements.

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Porter and Bradley's Storey Gymnasium, although a much larger building than the above-mentioned schools, also featured many similar Modern and International design elements.

F.H. Porter was a preservationist and fought for the preservation of the Union Pacific Depot, and the old Post Office and the Carnegie Library; however, of those buildings, only the Depot still stands. He died in Cheyenne on July 7, 1976.

In conclusion, the Storey Gymnasium remains in use as an important educational facility used jointly by two Cheyenne high schools and as the site for a wide variety of important community events. It retains excellent integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. It stands as a lasting tribute to Frederick Hutchinson Porter, who along with William Dubois, was the pre-eminent architect in the City of Cheyenne during the first half of the twentieth century.

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**Section 9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Adams, Judith. *Cheyenne: City of Blue Sky*. Northridge, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1967.
- Centennial Historical Committee. *The Magic City of the Plains: Cheyenne 1867-1967*. Published by the Centennial Historical Committee, 1967.
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- Gulliford, Andrew. *America's Country Schools*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1984.
- Haley, John Paul Jr. *A History of Laramie County School District No. 1, Cheyenne, Wyoming*. Master's Thesis Prepared for the Department of Education, University of South Dakota, 1956.
- Laramie County School District No. 1. Planning and Construction Office Files. Laramie County School District No. 1 Administration Building, 2810 House Avenue, Cheyenne.
- Lariat, The*. Cheyenne High School Yearbooks, 1922-1975.
- Sanborn Map Company. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of Cheyenne*, 1959. New York, New York: Sanborn Map Company.
- Starr, Eileen. *Architecture in the Cowboy State, 1849-1940*. Glendo, Wyoming: High Plains Press, 1992.