

COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NOMINATION FORM

SECTION I

Name of Property

Historic Name First National Bank

Other Names Old Bank Building; United Mine Workers of America Meeting Hall and Office

Address of Property

[] address not for publication

Street Address 226 Grand Avenue

City Paonia County Delta Zip 81428

Present Owner of Property

(for multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name Eugene D. & Margo B. Lorig

Address P.O. Box 1117, 609 N. Fork Avenue Phone (970) 527-5251

City Paonia State Colorado Zip 81428-1117

Owner Consent for Nomination

(attach signed consent from each owner of property - see attached form)

Preparer of Nomination

Name Cynthia L. Hass Date February 4, 2005

Organization Blue Sage Center for the Arts

Address P.O. Box 1803, 330 N. Fork Avenue Phone (970) 527-4171

City Paonia State Colorado Zip 81428-1803

FOR OFFICIAL USE:

Site Number 5DT.527

2/25/2005 Nomination Received

Senate # _____ House # _____

5/13/2005 Review Board Recommendation
 Approval Denial

5/18/2005 CHS Board State Register Listing
 Approved Denied

Certification of Listing: President, Colorado Historical Society

Date _____

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SECTION II

Local Historic Designation

Has the property received local historic designation?

no

yes --- individually designated designated as part of a historic district

Date designated _____

Designated by _____ (Name of municipality or county)

Use of Property

Historic COMMERCE/TRADE- financial institution; SOCIAL/ meeting hall

Current RECREATION AND CULTURE/ museum

Original Owner Ed Curtis

Source of Information Treasured Memories First Thirty Years; Delta County Cultural Resource

Survey form, 1981.

Year of Construction 1903

Source of Information Photographic documentation, Paonia Museum; Date on building façade.

Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist or Designer Hurst, Al; Stratton, Sege

Source of Information Delta County Cultural Resource Survey form, 1981.

Locational Status

Original location of structure(s)

Structure(s) moved to current location

Date of move _____

SECTION III

Description and Alterations

(describe the current and original appearance of the property and any alterations on one or more continuation sheets)

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SECTION IV

Significance of Property

Nomination Criteria

- A** - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history
- B** - property is connected with persons significant in history
- C** - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan
- D** - property is of geographic importance
- E** - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

Areas of Significance

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/
Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/
Settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/
Community Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/
Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community
Planning and
Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Social History |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |

Significance Statement

(explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION V

Locational Information

Lot(s) 13 Block 3 Addition Original Town

USGS Topographic Quad Map Paonia

Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property

(describe the boundaries of the nominated property on a continuation sheet)

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SECTION VI

Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs

(prepare a photograph log on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION VII

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY NOMINATION

Owner Consent Form

Black and White Photographs

Color Slides

Sketch Map(s)

Photocopy of USGS Map Section

Optional Materials

For Office Use Only

Property Type: building(s) district site structure object area

Architectural Style/Engineering Type: Late Victorian

Period of Significance: 1903

Level of Significance: Local State National

Acreage less than one

P.M. 6th Township 14S Range 91W Section 6 Quarter Sections SW, SE, NW, NE

UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 274635 Northing 4305111

Site Elevation: 5680 feet

Property Name First National Bank

DESCRIPTION and ALTERATIONS

The First National Bank Building is situated approximately mid-block at 226 Grand Avenue, on the west side of the street in Paonia. Second Street is south of the building and Third Street is north of the building. The long narrow lot has only the sidewalk as frontage with diagonal parking spaces on the street. It has zero lot front and sidelines between the neighboring buildings, which currently house Hays Drug to the south and the Blue Sage Center for the Arts to the north. It is positioned between two two-story buildings. The Bank building faces east and has early morning sun exposure. The rear lot area is open to an alley and currently has only sand as ground cover. There are no trees, plants or other landscaping features on the lot. Building measurements are approximately 24' wide by 75' long. The rear lot extends about 25' west to the alley.

Built by well-known local contractors/stone masons Al Hurst and Sege Stratton in 1903, the First National Bank building (currently known as the Old Bank Building) is a single-story structure with a basement and tar membrane roof. It is constructed of quarry-faced pink and white sandstone blocks, hauled via horse and wagon by Stratton from a local quarry. The building has a prominent centrally placed arched window with three smaller transom windows above two larger fixed glass panes on the bottom portion. An ornamental exterior iron grill covers the lower portion of the two lower windows, with a small area of stone supporting the lower windows. There are four square stone piers/imposts with simple capitals across the east façade; a pair flanks the door on the south end as well as on the north end. The two inner piers provide support for the arch over the window. When originally constructed, carved stones with the lettering "First National Bank" were centrally placed on the building façade above the arched window. That lettering was removed sometime prior to 1981. Additional carved stone lettering, which remains today, reflects the date of construction: "A.D." under the now blank area to the south (left) and "1903" under the blank area on the north (right).

Original existing wood panel doors with glass panels at the top are situated at the north and south sides of the building. The south door retains its original decorative hardware. Stone lintels top each doorway. Stone sills in each doorway show signs of wear over the past 100 years, and have slight depressions in their centers. Old photographs show the building had a retractable striped awning with the lettering "First National Bank" to decorate and shield the interior from morning sun.

Currently the rear elevation has a modern entry door towards the south side of the building. Access to the basement is just north of the modern door and is a below-grade metal door that lifts upward. Just above the basement entry is a slider with two fixed glass panes. A swamp cooler mounted to the stucco wall sits directly above and between the door and window. A segmental arch window has been filled in with wood and a small rectangular opening placed inside. The board has a hand-painted "No Parking" sign. Utility and electrical panels are just south of the filled in window. Ductwork from the Blue Sage Center for the Arts building to the north extends into the open area of the lot. The rear of the Bank building faces an alley.

Interior

Interior features of the building have been modified from the original interior components over time. The teller cage is no longer in the building with the date of that change unknown. The original built-in vault, measuring approximately 8.3' x 9.5', remains centrally located in the lobby area and retains its original inspection certificates on the inside of the door. The vault door has decorative engraving along the interior edges. The locking mechanism has been disabled for safety considerations. At some point the vault door was painted, again the date is unknown, and an attempt at restoring the original lettering

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Historic Image- June 17, 1909

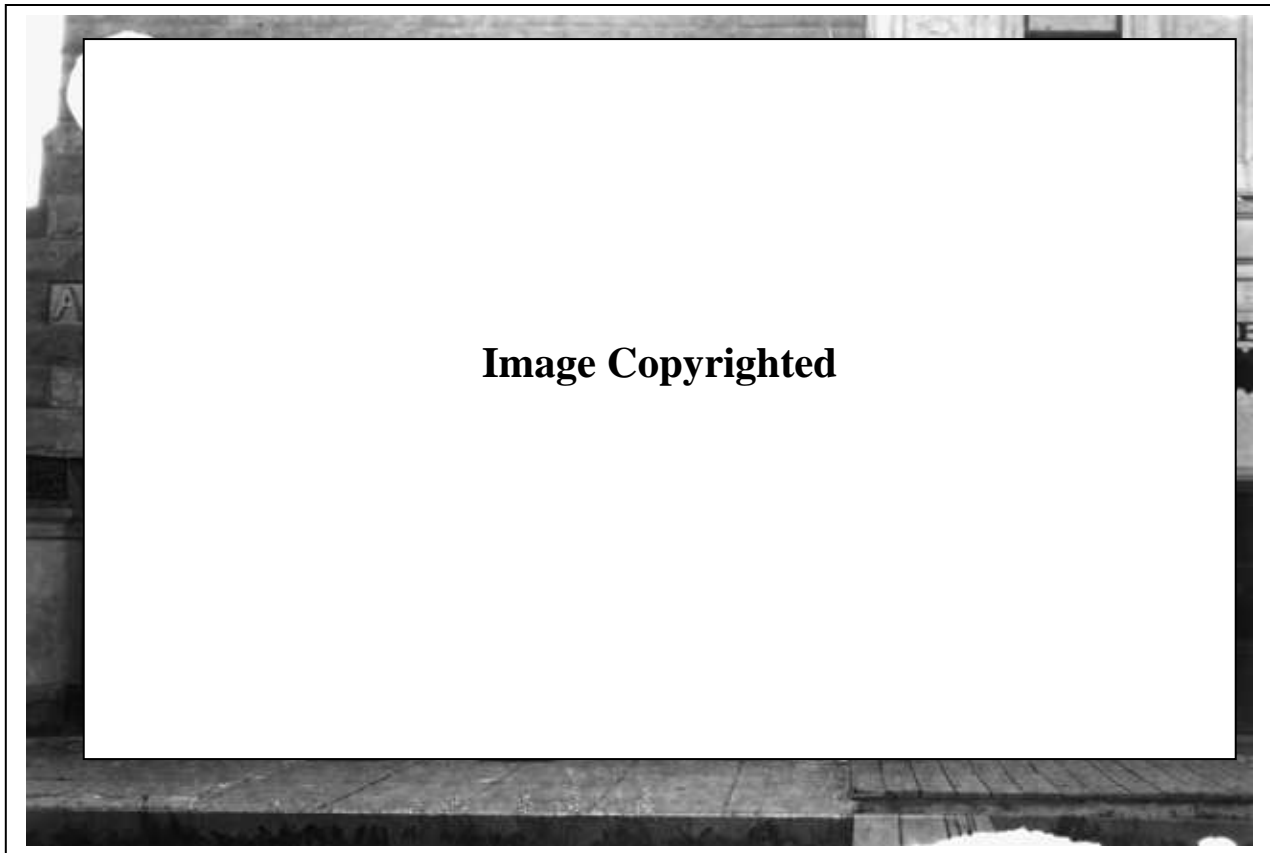


Image courtesy of Western History/ Genealogy
Department, Denver Public Library. Photo call number X-
12933. Taken by W.S. Edwards.

was made when the paint was removed. First National Bank, currently operating at 2nd and Grand Avenue, is donating the original smaller safe for display in the building.

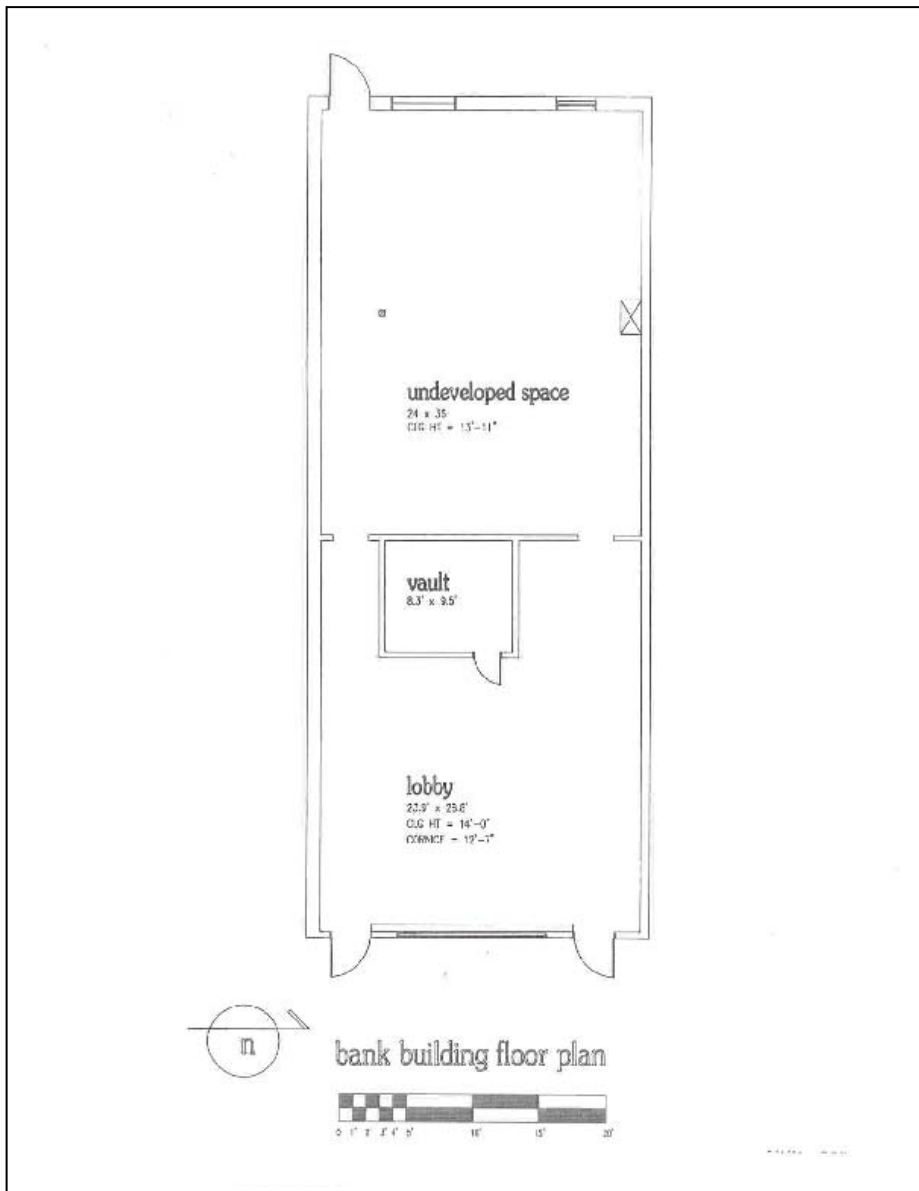
Modifications to the interior were made as its use changed from a bank to the town hall/ police headquarters/post office to the United Mine Workers of America meeting hall and office. The UMWA covered the top three arched transom windows with a steel sign that read "United Mine Workers of America District 15 Local 6417". They also installed a dropped ceiling for heating considerations and removed the original light fixtures. The lower part of the large front window had the letters UMWA painted across the front. The sandstone was painted several times in an effort to minimize wear to the soft stone as it was exposed to weather.

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Owners Mose & Maren Oppenheimer cleaned and painted the pressed tin ceiling panels after removing the dropped ceiling panels previously installed by the UMWA sometime between 2001-2004. Modern period light fixtures were also installed between 2001-2004, which replaced the fluorescent light fixtures that the UMWA installed. The steel UMWA sign was removed as well.

Interior partition walls were removed to make an open lobby space in the front of the building for its current use as an art gallery and a gathering place in the back for special events coordinated by the Blue Sage Center for the Arts. The rear interior space is currently drywalled and painted for use as a meeting room, gallery staging, and reception area.

Site Plan



Property Name First National Bank

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The First National Bank is eligible for the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The building represents the work of prominent local stonemasons Al Hurst and Sege Stratton and is their only known intact commercial work in town; their other extant properties include the First Christian Church and the Friends' Church. An excerpt from the *Souvenir of the North Fork Valley, Colorado* (pictured below on page 5) notes the skill and ability of Hurst and Stratton. Their work on the Friends' Church was stated to be "without question one of the most beautiful and complete buildings in the west," It is also noted that Hurst worked on the Mormon tabernacle in Salt Lake City in addition to the team's work on the First National and Fruit Exchange banks. (Though the Fruit Exchange building still stands, it has undergone significant alterations, making it difficult to identify as a Hurst and Stratton building. Very little stone work remains on the exterior.) The article closes by commenting, "Paonia is filled with buildings that are monuments to the ability of these men." The First National Bank Building is the most intact commercial building constructed by these men. Historic photos show that little change has occurred to the building over the past 100 years. Although the façade has been altered with the removal of the lettering across the top and paint applied to the stone, the Bank building still retains integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship.

The Bank building is also architecturally significant for its distinctive method of construction. It is the only commercial building in the downtown built of locally quarried and cut sandstone. While commercial buildings in downtown Paonia are constructed of either wood or brick, the entire façade of the Bank building is done in local sandstone, an unusual application for a commercial building and the only one remaining in town. Additionally, most of these buildings display Italianate elements of the nineteenth century Commercial style, including upper-story narrow double-hung windows, decorative cornices, and decorative window surrounds. Many of these buildings have been altered over the years, as is typical with commercial storefronts. The Bank building lacks this Italianate commercial influence, rather exhibiting some elements of Romanesque Revival style in the massive arch, stone piers, and square cut stone.

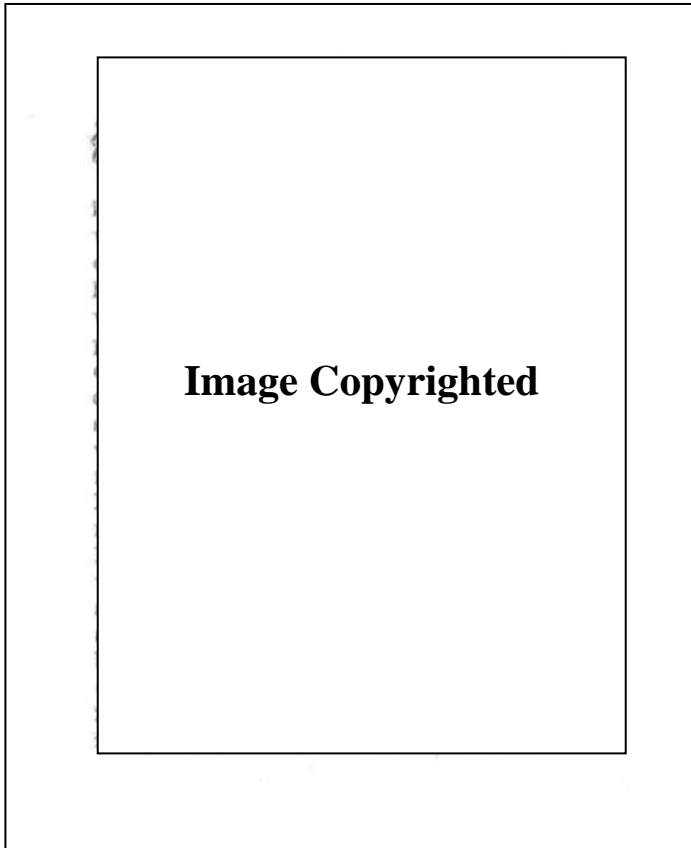
Historic Background

Founded in 1881 by Samuel Wade, Paonia is named for the peony roots brought to Colorado in his covered wagon. At the time of Wade's arrival, the U.S. Government was in the process of removing the Ute Indians to the reservations. After looking over the area with Enos Hotchkiss (founder of the neighboring town of Hotchkiss), Wade decided to stay. He surveyed the area, brought in the first fruit trees, and dug irrigation ditches in preparation for settlement of the town. Fruit- cherries, apples, peaches, and plums- quickly became the dominant agricultural product of the region. With Paonia fruit taking six first place awards at the 1893 Columbian Exposition/World's Fair and the arrival of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad- North Fork Line in 1902, the town's population boomed.

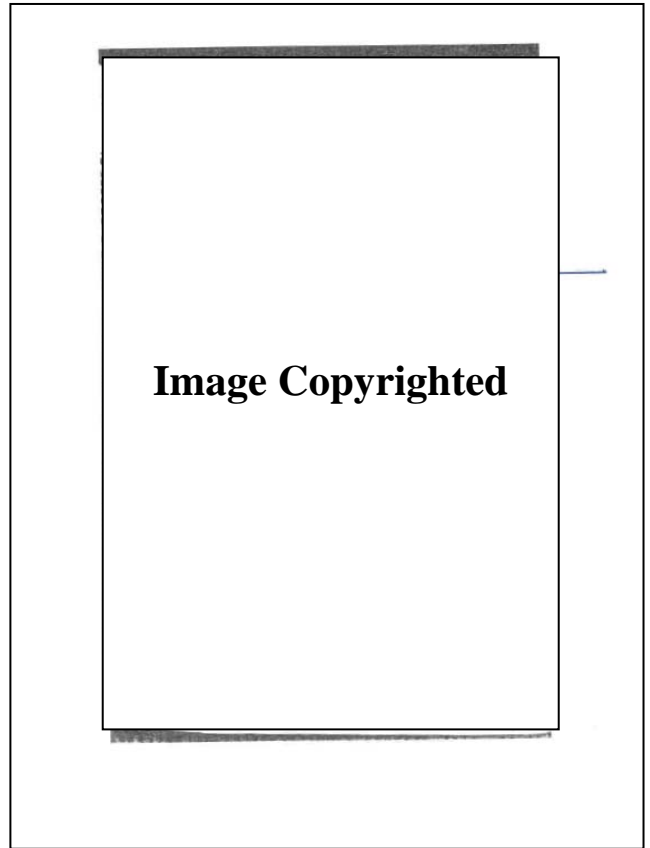
Though the town's roots were in agriculture, mostly fruit orchards: cherries, apricots, peaches, apples and pears, with some truck farming of produce; coal mining and ranching were also major economic influences in the region. The open land, flowing rivers, and vast forested meadows enticed cattlemen to Delta County almost immediately after settlement. An increase in the demand for beef caused the cattle ranchers to be the dominant force in the region for many years. Shepherders introduced sheep to the region, with strong opposition by the cattle ranchers. Nevertheless, by 1915, sheep herding surpassed cattle in profitability and became the animal of choice for the area. Mining also became a major industry due to the vast supply of coal (high quality anthracite coal). The railroad made transportation of this valuable resource an important part of the local economy, especially after the Great Freeze of 1912 destroyed many a farmer's fruit orchard. Only the hardiest and most determined

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Historic Images



Souvenir of the North Fork Valley,
Colorado, 1920s. Image courtesy of
Denver Public Library.



Colorado Business Directory, 1905
Image courtesy of Blue Sage Center
for the Arts.

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farmers remained to keep the fruit industry going. The fruit industry, however, has continued to be the mainstay for Paonia, despite weather and insect problems, following the boom and bust cycle that has constantly plagued Colorado cities and towns. Paonia was and still is, known for top quality fruit, now with a heavy emphasis on organic fruit produce.

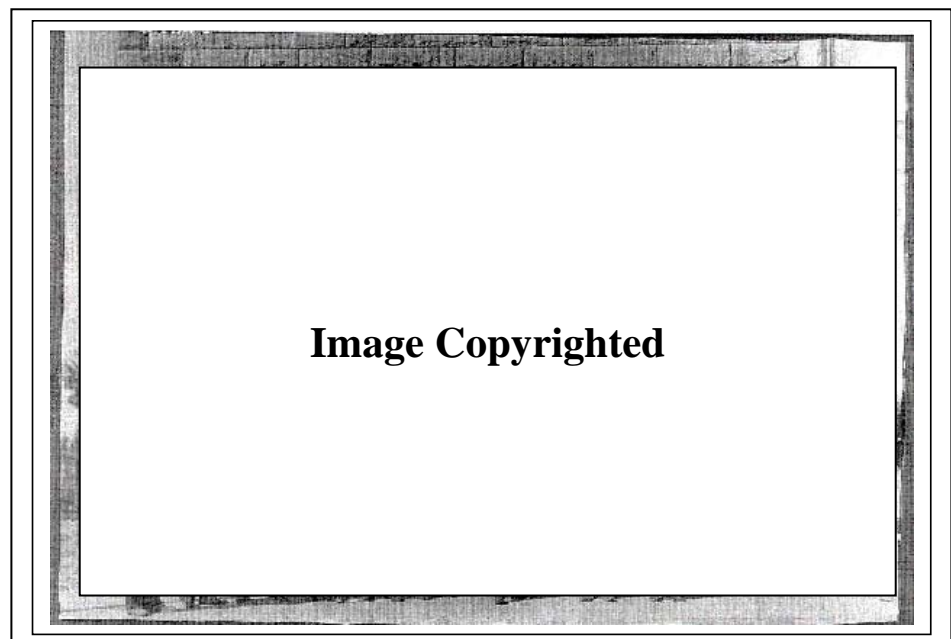
First National Bank, established by Ed Curtis who also ran the Curtis Hardware Store next door to the north, was the first of two banks in Paonia and was dedicated one year after the town of Paonia was formed. The second bank was the Fruit Exchange Bank, also built by stonemasons Hurst and Stratton, which did not survive "The Crash of '29". First National Bank serviced all of these contributors to the local economy - ranchers, fruit growers, and miners - as well as providing services to the local citizenry.

In 1905, the bank president was E.R. Morgan, L.W. Heston was vice president and A.R. Moller was cashier. As shown in old photographs, signs in the bank windows circa 1909 said, "Safe Deposit Boxes for Rent," "First Mortgages Wanted," "Pay Your Taxes Here," and "Notary Public."

When the First National Bank moved their offices, the building was sold to the town of Paonia on June 30, 1960 with the covenant that the building never again be used as a bank. That covenant has been followed in subsequent deeds. The sale price of the building on this date was \$6,000. The Town of Paonia sold the building after using it for the town hall, police headquarters and post office to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 6417 Building Corporation on December 1, 1983 for \$50,000. It was used as their local office and meeting hall once a month. No special events were ever held there, only business meetings. Picketers walked the line in front of their office, but their main Washington, D.C. union office called the strikes. When the title passed from the Town to the UMWA, the deed contained a restriction that the stone façade and arched windows were not to be modified in any way without prior written consent.

The building was sold yet again on October 25, 2001, to new owners Mose and Maren Oppenheimer for \$102,500, with the covenants of no future use as a bank and no changes to the façade or windows.

Title was transferred to Eugene and Margo Lorig on May 19, 2004, to hold for the Blue Sage Center for the Arts to purchase when sufficient funds are available to pay the mortgage.



1903, image courtesy
of the Blue Sage
Center for the Arts

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Stone Quarrying Background Information

The following information comes from the 100th anniversary publication for the First Christian Church, 1898-1998, Paonia, Colorado, attributed to Hazel Wood.

The road to the quarry at the back of what is called Mount Jumbo, with its brush bridges across the gulches, was built by R.J. Decker and his son, Orange. They also quarried, hauled and laid the foundation stone. The stones were from large sections that had broken off the ledges long before and had rolled to the leveler ground. The stones were carefully chosen and worked into usable size. The tools used were called gads and feathers. Skids made from long cedar logs anchored together to form a ramp up which the logs were rolled into the wagon beds. Stone for the walls was quarried North of Paonia to the East of the old Converse Mine. ... With much hardship, mishaps and lots of danger and with a mountain of good will, by September 18, 1906 there was ample stone on the grounds. ... The walls today are a memorial to the skill of the stonecutters; Al Hurst, Sege Stratton and Bert Edwards.

Hurst and Stratton were the stonemasons who contributed much to the architecture of the Town of Paonia through their skill and attention to detail. Their legacy remains in their stone buildings, such as the First National Bank.

First Christian Church



Church constructed 1898, picture taken 2004. Image courtesy of Fred Bishop, the Blue Sage Center for the Arts.

Friends Church



Church constructed circa 1906, picture taken 2005, Image courtesy of Fred Bishop, the Blue Sage Center for the Arts.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bishop, Fred. Interview, November 15, 2004, by Cynthia L. Hass.

Colorado Business Directory, 1905.

Delta County Recorders Office – Deeds.

First Christian Church, 1898-1998 Centennial brochure, on file at church, Paonia, Colorado.

Horner, Carol F. Delta County Cultural Resource Survey. Survey form on file- Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, July 1981.

King, Claudia. *Treasured Memories, First Thirty Years*. Paonia, CO: Paonia Chamber of Commerce, 1996.

Livingston, Judy. Interview, October 1, 2004, by Cynthia L. Hass.

Mathews House National Register nomination. On file, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, May 2004.

Palmer, Bill Sr. Telephone interview, November 18, 2004, by Cynthia L. Hass.

“Souvenir of the North Fork Valley, Colorado”, The Newspaper Book and Job Rooms, Paonia, CO, 1920s.

Unidentified newspaper clipping, “39. First National Bank 226 Grand Avenue,” Paonia Historical Museum archives.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 13, Block 3, original plat of the Town of Paonia, Colorado except a tract of land beginning at the Southeast corner of Lot 14, Block 3, Town of Paonia in Delta County, Colorado, thence West 135 feet, thence South 6-1/2 inches, thence East 135 feet, thence North 6-1/2 inches to place of beginning, being a strip of 6-1/2 inches wide off Lot 13, Block 3, said strip to be used for wall purposes.

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-10 except as noted:

Name of Property: First National Bank
Location: Delta County/ Colorado
Photographer: Fred Bishop
Date of Photographs: February 14, 2005

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 Panoramic street view, view to west.
- 2 East façade, view to west.
- 3 Interior- two glass & wood panel doors, arched front window with ornamental iron grillwork on exterior.
- 4 Original front door hardware on entry door.
- 5 Interior- front of vault door.
- 6 Interior- detail of vault door reflecting steel engraving.
- 7 Interior- vault door showing inspection certificates from The Charpriot Safe Company Inc. and the Yale Time Lock Inspection Service.
- 8 Interior- pressed tin ceiling panels and coves, modern period light fixtures.
- 9 Interior- back room detail.
- 10 West elevation (rear), view to east.

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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Paonia Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

