

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

✓ NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho TR)

✓ SITE NAME: Heuer Well House/Water Tank

SITE NUMBER: 95

LOCATION: ~~Three miles north and three miles east~~ ^{NE} of Jerome, ~~Idaho~~ ^{VIC}

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Louis Johns
Rural Route 1
Jerome, ID 83338

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Shoshone, SW, 7.5 minutes

ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

This nomination includes the Heuer Well House/Water Tank and the property on which it stands in lot 1, SW 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4 of Section 3, T8S, R17E, Boise Meridian. Legal description on file at Jerome County Courthouse, Jerome, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/709150/4737910

DATE OR PERIOD: 1929

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: H. T. Pugh,
Ed Bennett

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture, agriculture,
social/humanitarian

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local

CONDITION: good, altered, original site

DESCRIPTION:

This one and one-half story building is approximately 26 by 34 feet. Dark green, hexagonally shaped, decorative composition shingles cover the gambrel roof, which has a kick at the eaves and a plain, narrow bargeboard. There is a centered interior brick chimney. The ridge line has metal flashing ending in a ball at each end. Shiplap painted green is in the gables above the approximately ten-foot-high rubble walls. A decorative wooden molding separates the stone from the gables. There is a centered, shed-roofed dormer on both the front and the rear roof. The dormer roofs are continuous with the upper angle of the gambrel. A pair of double-hung windows is in each dormer and centered in each gable. Each pair of windows has a continuous, wide, unpainted, plain molding. A wide opening, offset just to the left of center on the front wall, has been filled in with shiplap. A single door with a window at the top is centered in the framed-in opening. A single door is centered on the rear wall. There is a window offset to the right on both the right and left walls. All of the windows in the building are six-over-one-light double-hung sash. Nearly flush concrete lintels above the windows on the first story are approximately ten inches wide and are inset into the stone approximately four inches on each end.

Projecting from the extreme left of the left wall is an approximately eight-by-thirteen-foot water tank. Its rear wall is an extension of the rear wall of the well house. It has a flat, concrete covered top. Medium to large sized stones are used in the random rubble walls of the building and in the connected water tank. Darkened, brushed mortar is in the wide joints.

SIGNIFICANCE:

This vernacular rural structure is significant as a variant of well house/water tank design, as an example of lava rock craftsmanship, and because of the role it played in the social life of the community. Although this farm structure was built primarily to house the well machinery and the water storage tank, it has had other uses. The wide double door opening indicates that it was used for vehicle storage. The second floor has been used as a bunk house and as a residence. The well is still operating, and the well house is currently used as a shop with room for storage. This variant of well house/water tank design has a large well house, and the water tank is constructed as an extension of the building.

When Mr. Heuer, of St. Louis, Missouri, visited his children in Idaho, he saw their need for a well. The construction of this building in 1929 was a gift from him to his sons, Fred and Gus Heuter, and daughter, Mrs. Clyde Bragg. The well house was placed on a ridge so that it could provide water pressure for the nearby farm home of the three. At the time this well was dug and the building was built, the majority of settlers did not have their own wells. Families used ditch water for household purposes and hauled drinking water from the wells of neighbors, sometimes miles away. When the Heuer well was completed, the family made the water available without cost to their neighbors who had no wells, as had been done earlier for them by another neighbor. Going to get drinking water provided farm families a brief evening respite from farm chores and an opportunity for visiting. Part of the social life of the immediate local farm community revolved around the well.

Masons H. T. Pugh and Ed Bennett worked together to construct this building. This is one of the few buildings on which these two skilled masons collaborated. The construction shows the careful, fine craftsmanship of Pugh. As in his other buildings, the mortar in this building is still in excellent condition. The rubble walls emphasize curved joints, a feature typical of Bennett's work. The enclosure of the wide door space on the facade has made the building more functional for current use and does not detract from the significant features of this building.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Heuer, August, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss, Jerome, Idaho, July 20, 1978.



Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho
Heuer Well House/Water Tank, site 95

Three miles north, three miles east of Jerome
Jerome vicinity, Jerome County, Idaho

Photograph by Virginia Ricketts
June 1983

Negative on file at the Idaho State Historical Society,
Boise, Idaho

View from northeast

Photograph one of one