

Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination
(for OAHP use only)

Date _____ Initials _____
 Determined Eligible - National Register
 Determined Not Eligible - National Register
 Determined Eligible - State Register
 Determined Not Eligible - State Register
 Need Data
 Contributes to eligible National Register District
 Noncontributing to eligible NR District

I. Identification

1. Resource number: 5HN68.17
2. Temporary resource number: 124
3. County: Hinsdale
4. City: Lake City
5. Historic building name: Gilmour-Humphrey-Liska House
6. Current building name:
7. Building address: 139 South Gunnison Avenue, Lake City, CO 81235
8. Owner name and address: William Horton and Donna Loury, 2631 Wadsworth Circle, Denver CO 80227

II. Geographic Information

- County Property No.: R1057
9. P.M. 6th Township 44N Range 4W NW4 of SE4 of NW4 of Section 34
 10. UTM reference
Zone 13 296630 mE 4210940 mN
 11. USGS quad name: Lake City Quad year: 1985 Map scale: X 7.5' ___ 15'
 - 12 Block(s): 4 Lot(s): 4-8 Legal: Block 4, lots 4-8 & vacated Silver Street
Addition: Foote & Richardson Addition Year of Addition: 1881
 13. Boundary description and justification: Perimeter of parcel

III. Architectural Description

14. Building plan: Irregular
15. Dimensions: 1414 square feet
16. Number of stories: 1-1/2
17. External wall material(s): Wood horizontal siding
18. Roof configuration: Cross gabled
19. Roof material: Metal
20. Special features: Chimney
21. General architectural description:

1-1/2 story, cross-gabled frame dwelling. Metal roof; composition roofing toward rear. Tall, corbeled brick chimney toward rear of south roof slope; brick chimney in east-west roof ridge. Gable ornament in east gable wall. Walls are clad in clapboards and trimmed with cornerboards. Façade has circa 1960 gabled entry porch supported by round posts; has fishscale shingles in gable end; it shelters a screen door and 15-lite door. Window in façade has wood shutters; is covered in painted plywood.

North-facing gable end has small entry porch with spindlework balusters; entrance accessed by wood stair case. Octagonal window in south gable end; gable wall has window of three 4-lites with crown molding above.

Shallow half-hipped projection on southwest corner. Shed-roofed addition on rear (west elevation) has centered entrance with paneled door and small pediment above. Flush skylight in south roof slope.

22. Architectural style/Building type: No style
23. Landscaping or special setting:
Large property with mature trees and vegetation.

24. Associated building, features or objects:

1. Barn/garage, circa 1920

1-1/2 story, side-gabled building. Steeply pitched roof is covered in corrugated metal roof. Walls are covered in asbestos shingles and wide horizontal wood siding. North elevation has swing out doors and 6-lite window in gable end. South elevation has 6/6 woodframe slider window in gable end. Long, one-story gabled section on northwest corner; north elevation is covered in horizontal boards and has swing-out doors of vertical boards. South elevation is partially enclosed in center in vertical log slabs; sections on either side are open to the south. Foundation covered in horizontal board.

2. Chicken coop, circa 1920

One-story, shed-roofed building. Asphalt roof; walls clad in vertical boards. Opening in southwest corner covered in chicken wire.

3. Root cellar/spring house, circa 1920

Small, gabled structure built into hillside. Metal roof; walls clad in horizontal boards. Opening in east facing gable end.

4. Privy, circa 1920

Small, one-story building roofed in deteriorating asphalt shingles, clad in vertical boards. East elevation has door of vertical boards.

5. Children's playhouse, circa 1964

Small, gabled, frame structure roofed in metal and sided in wide horizontal boards, possibly re-used from another building; shed-roofed section sided in vertical board. Door in east elevation; openings in south elevation, covered in plywood.

IV. Architectural History

25. Date of construction Estimate: _____ Actual: 1897 Source of info: Lake City TIMES, Thurs., July 1, 1897, page 3., Thurs., August 19, 1897, page 3

26. Architect: None Source of info:

27. Builder/contractor: John R. Gilmour Source of info: Lake City TIMES, Thurs., July 1, 1897

28. Original owner: J.R. Gilmour Source of info: Lake City TIMES, Thurs., July 1, 1897

29. Construction history (major additions, alterations, demolitions):

Bathroom addition; business office and expanded dining room and kitchen built on rear, circa 1945. Front of house rebuilt after damaged by car accident in 1961 (Gunnison NEWS-CHAMPION, Thurs., October 3, 1961, page 6)

30. Original location: Moved Date of move(s) _____

V. Historical Associations

31. Original use(s): Single dwelling

32. Intermediate use(s): Hotel (auto court)

33. Current use(s): Seasonal dwelling

34. Site type(s):

35. Historical background:

James R. Gilmour (1845-1918) was a versatile Lake City businessman whose career in the mid-to-late 1890s included work as a building contractor and dealer in paints, oil, glass and wallpaper. In an 1899 biographical account published shortly after he moved from Lake City to Canon City, Colorado, Gilmour recalled he "did much toward the improvement of Lake City and built four houses, all of which are modern and substantial."

One of those four houses -- and possibly the only extant Gilmour house in the Lake City Historic District -- is 139 South Gunnison Avenue. On June 1, 1897, it was reported O.A. Baker (see also 322B Silver and 310 Silver) was laying the foundation for a new Wade's Addition house to be occupied by J.R. Gilmour. Gilmour and family moved into the house on its completion in August, 1897, but lived there for

only a few months. In January, 1898, it was reported Lake Fork ranchman W.H. Robison and his bride "have gone into housekeeping in the residence vacated by J.R. Gilmour and family, just across the Gunnison Avenue bridge." Leon LeFevre was listed as owner of the house and property in September, 1902, when it was acquired for \$400 by W.C. Humphrey.

William C. Humphrey (1873-1925) was a young miner who formed a company to promote the Pearl and Ruby mines near Rose's Cabin on upper Henson Creek. He married a local girl, Emma L. Mayer (1882-1973), in Lake City in 1901 and had a daughter, Leta Merle Humphrey (born 1907), prior to succumbing to lung ailments in 1925. The Humphrey home was the location of Emma Humphrey's marriage to John R. Liska in 1928.

John and Emma Liska developed Liska's Cabins, Lake City's first tourist court. As owners of rental cabins, John and Emma Liska were early personifications of Lake City's transformation from mining to tourist economy. In lieu of payment as watchman at the Black Wonder Mill at Sherman, John Liska dismantled a number of old cabins, transported the numbered logs to Lake City and re-erected the buildings as tourist rentals on vacant land adjoining the couple's home. The process began in the late-1920s and continued into the 1930s as Liska dismantled and re-erected the Gavin Cabin (153 South Gunnison), LeBelle Cabin (155A South Gunnison), Blackstone Hotel (originally 126 South Gunnison, relocated to 310B Silver), and Columbine Cabin (124 South Gunnison).

In addition to constituted cabins brought to Lake City from Sherman, Liska Cabins also included a number of neighboring prior-existing structures, many of which were in a semi-abandoned state when they were acquired by the Liskas and turned into rentals. These included the Foster House (155B South Gunnison), Gray House (114 South Gunnison), and Williams House (112 South Gunnison), together with four Wade's Addition houses located outside the boundaries of Lake City Historic District: the Came House, an original frame portion of what is now Jessee's Sportsman's Texaco (250 South Gunnison), Square House (no longer extant), House-Watson House (148 South Gunnison), and Poker Alice Building (188 South Gunnison). In addition to these structures, John Liska also transformed an intended chicken coop into a rental (Horton Cabin, 141 South Gunnison), and rented a one-bedroom apartment with kitchen in a ground-floor portion of the frame garage behind the Liska house.

According to Emma Liska's granddaughter, Donna Horton Loury, the impetus for Liska Cabins was the simple fact "there was no place for people to stay, otherwise they had to pitch a tent." Each of the Liska rentals came fully equipped, according to Mrs. Loury, with firewood and coal, dishes and pans, and all linens. Kitchens were equipped with wood cook stoves; refrigerators were an unknown luxury and in their stead guests at the cabins kept food cool by using screened coolers which were attached on the north side of the structures. Bathrooms consisted of several communal outhouses conveniently situated around the compound. Water was supplied from a shared water pump.

"Twelve large cabins" are cited in a newspaper advertisement for Liska's Cabins in July, 1940. "You'll like these cabins," the advertisement continues, "because they are comfortable in every respect. Families with children given special accommodation." By the early 1950s, rates at Liska Cabins were \$3.50 a night for a single bed, \$4.50 for doubles, and cots available at 50-cents. Mrs. Liska gave discount rates for cabins which were rented by the week or month.

Extant outbuildings at 139 South Gunnison include a white-painted child's playhouse which started out as a chicken coop but which was remodeled for children's use in 1964. A combination shed and cellar burrowed into the hillside was known as the "Delco House" and was the location of a battery-operated Delco generator which supplied a minimal 32-volt current to the cabins and Liska residence. Electricity in the cabins was limited primarily to 40-watt light bulbs; visitors from outside the area found that they were unable to use appliances such as radios, toasters, etc. which were not adapted to 32-volts.

Lake City resident Pete Greenbank, who joined his parents on annual summer treks from Kansas to Lake City beginning in the 1930s, recalled that his father received a stern lecture from Mrs. Liska when he switched a 40-watt bulb for one of greater wattage in one of the cabins. Mrs. Liska did have appliances adapted for the available voltage in her own home, including a wringer washing machine which washed linens for all the cabins. Liska's Cabins continued uninterrupted from the late 1920s until 1959 when Mrs. Liska, then a widow, sold a majority of the rental cabins to R.E. Gibson.

At the time 139 South Gunnison Avenue was acquired by William and Emma Humphrey, the house consisted of a living room-dining room combination, kitchen, bedroom and small back porch. Later additions included one of Lake City's first modern bathrooms, a porch to the south which was later converted into a business office for the rentals, and expanded dining room and kitchen.

An unanticipated remodel occurred in late September, 1960, when a car missed the highway curve and crashed into the house, narrowly missing Mrs. Liska who was in the living room watching television at the time of the mishap. As a result of the crash, the office was incorporated into the living room and large windows were added. Emma Liska continued to live in the home until shortly before her death in 1973. The old home is now the summer residence of Mrs. Liska's granddaughter, Donna Horton Loury.

36. Sources of information:

Lake City TIMES, Thurs., July 1, 1897, page 3, Thurs., August 19, 1897, page 3, Thurs., August 26, 1897, page 3, Thurs., December 2, 1897, page 3, Thurs., January 6, 1898, page 3, Thurs., September 25, 1902, page 3; Gunnison NEWS-CHAMPION, Thurs., July 11, 1940, Thurs., October 3, 1961, page 6; Portrait & Biographical Record of the State of Colorado, Chapman Publishing Co., Chicago, 1899, page 292; letter from Donna Horton Loury to Grant Houston, October, 2001, and telephone conversation, March 14, 2003.

VI. Significance

37. Local landmark: Yes No Date of design.: _____ Design. authority: _____

Within Lake City Historic District (local historic district)

38. Applicable National Register Criteria:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory
- Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G
- Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria

39. Area(s) of significance: Social history, entertainment and recreation, architecture

40. Period of significance: 1897 - 1904, 1929 - 1953

41. Level of significance: National State Local

42. Statement of significance:

This house is associated with settlement and development of Lake City during the late 1800s mining era. It is a slightly altered representative of the vernacular dwellings constructed in Lake City during this period, as reflected in its simple design, clapboard siding, gabled roof, and lack of architectural details that indicate a particular style. The barn/garage, privy, root cellar, and chicken coop located at the rear of the lot are also associated with settlement and development of Lake City. They are representative of the outbuildings constructed in Lake City in the late 1800s and early 1900s as reflected in their backyard location, log and frame construction, and wood siding.

The property is also significant for its association with the growth and development of recreation and tourism in Lake City from 1915 through the 1960s, following the local decline of hard rock mining. Developed with miners' cabins moved down from Sherman, it opened in 1929 as the Liska Cabins, the first "tourist camp" auto court in the town of Lake City.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity to significance:

Although slightly altered by repair to the façade and construction of the front entry porch, this dwelling retains its architectural integrity.

VII. National Register Eligibility Assessment

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: Eligible Not Eligible Need Data

45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes No

Discuss _____

If there is National Register district potential, is this building Contributing Noncontributing

46. If the building is in an existing National Register district is it? Contributing Noncontributing
(Lake City National Historic District)

VIII. Recording Information

47. Photograph numbers: Roll 20, frames 11A, 15A; Roll 25, frames 10-18 Negatives filed at: Lake City Town Hall
48. Report title: 2003 Architectural Survey of Lake City, Colorado
49. Date(s): September 2002 - June 2003
50. Recorders Cathleen M. Norman and Grant E. Houston
51. Organization: Town of Lake City
52. Address: 230 Bluff Street, Lake City CO 81235 53. Phone no. (970) 944-2333

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