

Architectural Inventory Form**Official Eligibility Determination
(for OAHF 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: 5HN68.38
2. Temporary resource number: 89
3. County: Hinsdale
4. City: Lake City
5. Historic building name: Kohler-Ralph-Smith House
6. Current building name:
7. Building address: 500 Silver Street, Lake City, CO 81235
8. Owner name and address: Wesley Smith and E. N. Smith, Jr., 309 Bank One Building, 700 Pitts Avenue, Marshall TX 75672

II. Geographic Information

County Property No.: R1240

9. P.M. 6th Township 44N Range 4W NE4 of SE4 of NW4 of SW4 of Section 27
10. UTM reference
Zone 13 296830 mE 4211640 mN
11. USGS quad name: Lake City Quad year: 1985 Map scale: X 7.5' ___ 15'
12. Block(s): 39 Lot(s): 17-21 Legal:
Addition: Year of Addition:
13. Boundary description and justification: Perimeter of parcel

III. Architectural Description

14. Building plan: Irregular
15. Dimensions: 969 square feet
16. Number of stories: 1
17. External wall material(s): Brick
18. Roof configuration: Gabled
19. Roof material: Metal
20. Special features: Porch, chimney, fence
21. General architectural description:

One-story, gabled masonry dwelling. Metal roof with two brick chimneys in roof ridge. Walls are brick with grooved mortar in the joints. Porch in southwest ell has Ionic columns supporting an entablature; turned balusters; and pedimented window hood facing southwest. Porch shelters an entrance with a rounded-corner surround and an elaborate door with flattened-arch lites (one clear and one with frosted glass in a foliage pattern) and a transom.

The south and west gable ends each have a triple window of thin, narrow 1-over-1s surmounted by a segmental-arched lintel; the center window has a flattened arch and side windows are round arched. Windows have stone sills and functional shutters. Windows in north elevation are two 1-over-1 double hungs with functional shutters. Small gabled addition on rear has door and 1-over-1 double hungs. Stone foundation

22. Architectural style/Building type: No style
23. Landscaping or special setting:
Property is large corner lot with white picket fence around perimeter.
24. Associated building, features or objects:
Shed, pre 1902
One-story, front-gabled frame building. Metal roof; walls clad in horizontal boards; board and batten in gable end. Doors are vertical board with horizontal or horizontal and diagonal bracing. Swing out doors at alley.
- Privy, circa 1920
Small, gabled frame building, roofed in wood shingles and clad in horizontal siding

IV. Architectural History

25. Date of construction Estimate: _____ Actual: 1881 Source of info: Lake City SILVER WORLD, Nov. 13, 1880, Nov. 27, 1880, Dec. 4, 1880, March 19, 1881
26. Architect: Unknown Source of info:
27. Builder/contractor: Samuel Tarkington and Jack Wells Source of info: Lake City SILVER WORLD
28. Original owner: Henry Kohler Source of info: Lake City SILVER WORLD
29. Construction history (major additions, alterations, demolitions):
Porch with Classical Revival features added in 1911. Metal roof.
30. Original location: Moved Date of move(s) _____

V. Historical Associations

31. Original use(s): Single dwelling
32. Intermediate use(s):
33. Current use(s): Seasonal dwelling
34. Site type(s):
35. Historical background:

Henry Kohler was a prominent Lake City businessman who opened the town's first retail drug store in partnership with S.K. Kostitch in 1876. Kostitch left in 1879 to open the eleventh drug store in Leadville, Colorado, after which Kohler conducted the business on his own. As a prelude to Henry Kohler's later career, stationery for Kostitch & Kohler in 1877 lists the fact the firm carried paints and oils in addition to drugs, medicines, stationery, "wines and liquors for medicinal use, tobacco and cigars, etc."

Born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1854, Henry Kohler received his formal school education in Germany where he took university classes in chemistry. He conducted his Lake City drug store from 1876 until 1885. In March, 1881, he married Sophia Nightingale in Germany and returned to Lake City with his bride. In advance of his wedding trip, Kohler contracted with Samuel Tarkington to erect the brick residence at 500 Silver Street. On his return, he presented the house as a gift to his bride.

Under supervision of Samuel Tarkington, Jack Wells began work on the walls of the Kohler residence in November, 1880, the Lake City SILVER WORLD noting "the walls of Dr. Kohler's new brick house grow apace, although it is a constant contest between Jack Frost and the mortar mixers and bricklayers." In early December the newspaper noted walls of the home were up to height, a confirmation "Jack Wells triumphed over Jack Frost."

Tarkington was also in charge of masonry work on a brick house for C.F. Hilgenhaus (531 Gunnison Avenue) at the same time, the interior carpentry work on both the Kohler and Hilgenhaus houses being completed by Anton Fjelle in spring, 1881. In December, 1882, it was reported Lake City possessed nine first class pianos, the newest being a rosewood upright which Henry Kohler presented to his wife... "Mrs. K. was induced to visit some friends, when she returned the piano was in the parlor ready to answer the summons."

Henry and Sophia Kohler relocated to the recently opened lands on the former Ute Indian Reservation at

present-day Cedaredge, Colorado, in 1885. Kohler was associated with the Bar I Ranch and it was reportedly Mrs. Kohler who suggested the name "Cedaredge" for the settlement after admiring a row of cedar trees on the ranch. The couple moved to Denver in 1902 where Kohler became president of the Humphrey-Jones Mercantile Co. dealing in paints, lead, oil, glass, varnishes, and brushes. The company evolved into the KOMAC Paint Co., the abbreviated initials Kohler and his partner, Frank McLister. Henry Kohler died in Denver in 1940.

Following their departure for Cedaredge, Colorado, the Kohlers began using their Lake City residence as a rental, retaining ownership until October, 1901, when it was sold to R.L. Ray for between \$1,500 and \$2,000. Renters in the home included Wm. Roan (1885), O.H. Knight (1894), George D. Bardwell (1896), J.T. Palmer (1899), R.L. Ray (1901), R.E. Penniston (1904), and G.R. Neil (1905). At a time when a majority of Lake City residences were routinely valued at a couple hundred dollars for tax purposes, the Kohler brick house was for years assessed with a \$1,000 valuation. The house was sold to local businessman Francis A. Ralph and his wife, Anna Elizabeth Ralph, in 1909. Mr. Ralph worked as a miner, his local business interests including at different times a livery stable, restaurant and saloon. The Ralphs made slight alterations to the house, primary of which was construction of the front porch with Ionic columns in April, 1911.

The Kohler-Ralph House changed from year-round use to seasonal ownership in 1939, the year in which Mrs. Ralph died. The house and corner lots were briefly owned by Oklahoma visitor O.R. Lively in 1939, and he in turn sold it to Mac Harris in 1943. The property was sold to E.N. and Bessie Smith of Marshall, Texas, in 1950 and is today owned by the Smiths' sons, Ed and Wesley.

Outbuildings at the Kohler-Ralph House consist of frame privy and a frame front-gabled storage building, a portion with exposed 2x4 framing, the latter evident in the Oct., 1902, Sanborn Co. Insurance Map for Lake City

36. Sources of information:

Lake City SILVER WORLD, Sat., March 1, 1879, page 3, Sat., March 8, 1879, page 3, Sat., November 13, 1880, page 3, Sat., November 27, 1880, page 3, Sat., December 4, 1880, page 3, Sat., March 19, 1881, page 3, Sat., October 17, 1885, page 4, Thurs., June 15, 1922, page 3; Stone's HISTORY OF COLORADO, S.J. Clark Publishing Co., Chicago, 1918, pages 439-340; "Surface Creek History" by Hazel Baker Austin, privately printed 1977, pages 2-4; Lake City MINING REGISTER, Fri., March 18, 1881, page 3, Fri., December 15, 1882, page 3; Lake City TIMES, Thurs., October 31, 1901, page 3, Thurs., November 4, 1909, page 3, Thurs., April 27, 1911, page 3, Thurs. April 14, 1910, page 5; Denver TIMES, Mon., November 17, 1902, Sec. 2, page 12; Denver POST, Mon., November 11, 1940; Gunnison NEWS-CHAMPION, Thurs., August 3, 1939, page 8, Thurs., August 12, 1943, page 4; undated letter from Willena Allen Smith, Marshall, Texas; Sanborn Insurance Map of Lake City, Hinsdale County, October, 1902.

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, architecture
40. Period of significance: 1881 -1904
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 was the residence of prominent early merchant Henry Kohler, who opened the first drug store in 1876, and owned a series of other businesses. Kohler began selling paint and varnish at his drug store. After leaving Lake City he partnered with founded the KOMAC (Kohler- McLister) Paint Company, which expanded into regional firm.

Built of locally kilned brick, the house is the most intact brick dwelling that remains in the town; others have been painted. It is the only example of Classical Revival influence in Lake City, as seen in the elaborate porch with Ionic columns and wide entablature. The porch was added in 1911 in response to the popularity of classical architecture in the early twentieth century in Colorado and throughout the U.S. The house is architecturally intact and occupies a large corner lot with rows of narrow-leafed cottonwoods.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity to significance:
The architectural integrity of this dwelling is intact, as evidenced by minimal alterations to its character-defining features.

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 7, frames 16-24, 26-29; Roll 28, Negatives filed at: Lake City Town Hall
frame 1
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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NOT TO SCALE