



## United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW  
Washington D.C. 20005

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to announce actions on the following properties for the National Register of Historic Places. For further information contact Edson Beall at (202) 354-2255 or E-mail: [Edson\\_Beall@nps.gov](mailto:Edson_Beall@nps.gov)  
Visit our web site at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr>

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 1/14/08 THROUGH 1/18/08

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

### ALABAMA, ELMORE COUNTY

Hagerty, Abel, House, 4690 Jasmine Hill Rd., Wetumpka, 07001389, LISTED, 1/14/08

### ALABAMA, LEE COUNTY

Jenkins Farmhouse, 1190 Co. Rd. 38, Dupree vicinity, 07001390, LISTED, 1/15/08

### COLORADO, BENT COUNTY

Las Animas Post Office, 513 6th St., Las Animas, 07001392, LISTED, 1/16/08  
(New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS)

### COLORADO, BOULDER COUNTY

Metal Mining and Tourist Era Resources of Boulder County, MPS 64500997  
ADDITIONAL COVER DOCUMENTATION ACCEPTED, 1/17/08

### COLORADO, EL PASO COUNTY

Maytag Aircraft Building, 701 S. Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs, 07001393,  
LISTED, 1/16/08

### COLORADO, OTERO COUNTY

Rocky Ford Post Office, 401 9th St., Rocky Ford, 07001394, LISTED, 1/16/08  
(New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS)

### COLORADO, PARK COUNTY

Fairplay Hotel, 500 Main St., Fairplay, 07001395, LISTED, 1/16/08

### COLORADO, WASHINGTON COUNTY

Akron Gymnasium, W. 4th St. & Custer Ave., Akron, 07001397, LISTED, 1/16/08  
(New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS)

### GEORGIA, WILCOX COUNTY

Rochelle Historic District, Centered on 1st Ave and Ashley St., Rochelle, 07001398,  
LISTED, 1/15/08

### MASSACHUSETTS, MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Pinkham, Richard, House, 24 Brooks Park, Medford, 07001399, LISTED, 1/16/08

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Akron Gymnasium

other names/site number Washington County High School Gymnasium; 5WN.198

2. Location

street & number W. 4th Street and Custer Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Akron [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Washington code 121 zip code 80720

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- [ ] entered in the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain [ ] See continuation sheet.

Akron Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Washington County/Colorado  
County/State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

### Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Sports Facility  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/Auditorium  
EDUCATION/School

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements  
Other: WPA Modernist

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick

roof Concrete  
other \_\_\_\_\_

### Narrative Description

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

Akron Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Washington County/Colorado  
County/State

## 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(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  
# \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Education

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

### Periods of Significance

1938-1957

### Significant Dates

1938

### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Groves, Eugene

Works Progress Administration (WPA)

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Akron Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Washington County/Colorado  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- |    |      |         |          |         |
|----|------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1. | 13   | 651837  | 4447032  | (NAD27) |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |         |
| 2. |      |         |          |         |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |         |
| 3. |      |         |          |         |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |         |
| 4. |      |         |          |         |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |         |

The UTMS were derived from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to OAHF by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

[ ] See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Abbey Christman (for property owner)  
organization Colorado Preservation, Inc. date 5/1/07  
street & number 333 Colfax Ave., Suite 300 telephone (303) 893-4260  
city or town Denver state CO zip code 80204

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

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

name Lexin Brent  
street & number 24477 U.S. Hwy 34 telephone 970-345-6823  
city or town Akron state CO zip code 80720

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Akron Gymnasium  
Washington County, Colorado

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(New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS)

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## DESCRIPTION

Akron, located in northeastern Colorado, is the seat of Washington County. The Akron Gymnasium sits at the intersection of W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Custer Avenue in a residential section on the western edge of town. The Washington County Fairgrounds are sited to the west. There are grass lawns on the east and north sides of the gymnasium. Overgrown plants and trash obscure much of the west side. On the south side apartment buildings and a paved parking lot are located where the high school once stood.

The building consists of four sections: a two-story classroom section on the east side (photo 2); a gymnasium/auditorium at the center (photo 4); a two-story backstage/ dressing room section on the west side of the gymnasium (photo 7); and a single-story garage/shop section on the west side of the backstage/dressing room section (photo 6). A domed concrete roof covers the gymnasium while the other sections have flat roofs. The gymnasium originally abutted the north side of the high school. The school district demolished the high school around 1970, leaving a rough brick wall exposed (photo 3).

The domed-roof is the gymnasium's most distinctive feature (photos 4, 10-12). The Works Progress Administration (WPA) project file describes the gymnasium as a "reinforced concrete structure, with unique domed roof." The roof is built up of two rows of bar joist and two reinforced concrete purlins. A poured concrete slab over a wire mesh serves as the ceiling and roof. Roll roofing covers the concrete slab on the exterior and sprayo-flake on the interior. The concrete roof featured skylights, which were the primary source of illumination for the gymnasium. These skylights have been covered but the openings remain. The reinforced concrete structure has a red clay brick veneer. All floors are reinforced concrete resting on bar joists and screeded to receive wood flooring.

The main entrance is located on the east side at the classroom section. The facade is set back at the south corner with a one-and-a-half story brick entrance located within the set back. Bricks are set in an arch pattern above the rectangular, recessed entryway. A metal, single-panel door has replaced the original door, but a four-light transom survives. A single, first floor window is located south of the brick entrance section. North of the brick entrance section, the first and second floors each have a row of five windows. The windows on the first floor are 6-over-1 wood sash type. The windows on the second floor are missing, and boards cover the openings. On the south side of the classroom section there are two, 6-over-1 windows on the first and second floors. There are no windows on the north side of the classroom section. A brick chimney is located on the north side. The classroom section of the building includes a 29' x 22' recreation room, 22' x 30' domestic science room, and a 17' x 15' superintendent's office.

The gymnasium section is 106' x 61' with a 22' x 60' stage. On the north side of the gymnasium, there are three window openings. Two openings contain 12-over-12 wood sash type windows; boards cover the other opening. Two doors are located on the north side; metal, single-panel doors have replaced the original doors. Originally, the south side of the gymnasium abutted the high school. There appear to have been two door openings connecting the buildings; concrete fills these openings. There were also seven window openings between the gymnasium and high school; brick fills these openings.

At the backstage/dressing room section, the only openings are three small basement level windows on the north side. A brick chimney is located on the west side of the backstage section.

On the garage/shop section, there are three window openings on the south side. The openings have wood-framed sash windows, but the frames are in poor condition and it is impossible to tell how many

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lights the frames had originally. On the west side, there are two window openings; board covers one opening and the other frame is in poor condition. There is also a non-original single panel door. A large section of the brick veneer on the west side has fallen off, revealing the concrete wall beneath. On the north side, there is an overhead garage door, a boarded-over pedestrian doorway, and a window opening missing most of its original frame.

*Integrity*

Overall, the gymnasium retains integrity of design, association, workmanship, location, and feeling. The demolition of the adjacent high school building impacts the integrity of setting. However, this does not affect the gymnasium's WPA association. The gymnasium was abandoned for many years. While this means that the integrity of design is high, without the modifications or modernizations that typically come with continued use, without regular maintenance, the original materials have deteriorated. While most of the original windows are intact, many of the window frames are in very poor condition and covered by boards. The skylights in the roof have also been covered. The single-panel doors have replaced the original doors.



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Akron Gymnasium  
Washington County, Colorado

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## SIGNIFICANCE

The Akron Gymnasium, constructed between 1938 and 1940 under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) is being nominated under the *New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The Akron Gymnasium meets the registration requirements of two property types delineated in the MPDF: *Educational Buildings (subtype: Primary and Secondary School Facilities)* and *Recreational and Cultural Resources (subtype: Community Centers and Auditoriums/Gymnasiums)*.

The Akron Gymnasium meets Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal legislative agenda to rescue the United States from the Great Depression. This agenda included the creation of an unprecedented number of policies, programs, and agencies to provide relief, employment, conserve natural resources, and assist in construction of public works—all with the greater goal of stimulating the devastated economy. Constructed by the WPA, the Akron Gymnasium presents an important record of the federal relief programs administered in Colorado's eastern plains during the Great Depression. Though the dire economic conditions of the Depression affected all of Colorado, drought and dust storms hit the agricultural-based economy of the Eastern Plains especially hard. The construction of the gymnasium provided much-needed employment in Washington County. The New Deal construction programs emphasized projects providing civic, educational, and health benefits for a community. During these difficult times, New Deal agencies also recognized the psychological benefits of recreational and cultural activities.

Additionally, the Akron Gymnasium meets Criterion A for its significance in the area of Education. Educational facilities were a major focus of New Deal construction and a combination auditorium/gymnasium was a common New Deal project. The WPA created a needed modern facility for the Washington County School District providing a gymnasium with a full-size basketball court, a stage for use by theater and music groups, additional classroom space, and a shop facility. The gymnasium served the high school until 1964.

The Akron Gymnasium also meets Criterion A for its significance in the area of Entertainment/Recreation. The building is a good example of the efforts of the WPA to boost morale during the Depression through the construction of buildings that the entire community could enjoy. Though its primary function was for the high school, local residents attended sporting events, theatrical performances, and other events in the gymnasium/auditorium space. This large, multi-use gymnasium and auditorium space was an important addition to the social life of the small town of Akron, which had a population around 1,400 in 1940.

The Akron Gymnasium meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It is a good example of WPA Modernist design. Concrete construction and modern styling dominate New Deal projects in northeast Colorado in contrast to the stone buildings in rustic and revival styles that typify southeast Colorado. Eugene Groves, an established Denver architect recognized for his innovative use of concrete, designed the gymnasium. This was unusual since WPA staff engineers typically designed projects, creating buildings more conventional in design. The prominent feature of the gymnasium is its domed concrete roof with skylights. The gymnasium remains a striking modern landmark in Akron.

The period of significance begins in 1938 with the start of construction of the gymnasium as a WPA project and ends in 1957. Though the gymnasium remained in use by Akron schools until in 1964, the period of significance ends in 1957 in order to comply with the National Register's fifty-year rule.



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***Historical Background***

Gymnasiums were among the most popular New Deal projects on Colorado's Eastern Plains. Among the communities receiving new gymnasiums were Hugo, Stratton, Burlington, Seibert, Haxtun, Kim, Holly, Fleming, Otis, Branson, Frederick, Two Buttes, Granada, Hartman, and Hoehne. Most of these communities had limited gymnasium facilities previously, often too small for a regulation basketball court. The new gymnasiums allowed school districts to improve their physical education instruction and host games. The gymnasiums also typically included a stage at one end of the playing court so that they could serve a dual purpose as auditoriums, providing a performance space for school theater and music performances. The gymnasiums included dressing rooms, restrooms, and often a classroom or two. However, the gymnasiums were not just for student use. These buildings also served as community centers (they were often the largest public building in a community), hosting a variety of celebrations, dances, and other community activities.

In 1936, the Washington County School Board decided to pursue a New Deal project to construct a new gymnasium for the high school in Akron. The first action of the school board was choosing an architect. In December, the board chose Eugene Groves, an established architect of educational buildings in Colorado. Eugene Groves (1882-1967) was born in Dana, Indiana, and moved to Denver in 1914. He practiced architecture for five decades, gaining renown for his design of numerous educational and government facilities in Colorado. Groves incorporated a variety of styles in his buildings including Art Deco, Art Moderne, Beaux Arts, Italian Renaissance Revival, and Colonial Revival.

The Washington County School Board was familiar with Groves' previous work. In an article from December 24, 1936 announcing the gymnasium project, the *Akron News-reporter* described Groves as "extremely well-known and reliable," and reported that "several Akron people have had the pleasure of inspecting buildings of Mr. Groves' design and are very well pleased with the style of edifice he builds." The article mentioned Groves' many buildings on the campus of Colorado State University in Fort Collins, the Golden High School, the Mitchell Elementary School in Golden, and the William M. Smith High School in Aurora. Groves had also designed the Fairview School (Denver), the Bethune School (Bethune), the Lowell Elementary School (Grand Junction), and the Grand Junction High School (Grand Junction). The Washington County School District was also likely familiar with Groves' recent courthouse projects in eastern Colorado—the Phillips County Courthouse (1935) and the Morgan County Courthouse (1936).

The school district also chose Groves for his innovative use of concrete materials. According to the *Akron Newsreporter*: "One of the outstanding features of his work is the featuring of a new type of ceiling which does away with the conventional truss and cantilever types of bracing the roof. It consists of a method of lacing steel rods together, which not only makes the building stronger, but also actually decreases the cost." The skylights were also part of the original plan. Groves initially planned that these would be the only windows in the main section; the skylights would "let in ample light for use of the structure in the daytime and also eliminate any tendency to glare as the glass is heavily frosted."

Groves designed three concrete houses in Denver during the 1930s: the Holland House (1932), the Sherman House (1935), and the National Register-listed Nordlund House (1938). In December 1936, Groves submitted a patent application for a new concrete construction technique that would eliminate all woodwork and rely on pre-formed concrete structural members. The goal was to create a simple, economic, and efficient means to construct durable, fireproof buildings. This system relied on precast

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concrete studs and beams that supported concrete slab floors and wire mesh walls covered with concrete stucco. In 1936, Groves established the Concreter Corporation to construct buildings using this process.

Concrete was a common construction material for New Deal projects in northeastern Colorado. The WPA constructed Art Deco style gymnasiums in Burlington, Hugo, Seibert, and Frederick. Groves' domed roof was unusual and innovation, creating a spacious gymnasium and auditorium space lit by skylights. The domed roof is a feature also found in Groves' concrete houses. However, except for the domed roof, the exterior appearance of the Akron Gymnasium is simple and traditional. Groves employed no ornamentation on the exterior, likely reflecting the fact that the school district was chiefly concerned with square footage and constructing as large a building as possible. Red brick covered the concrete structure of the gymnasium so that it would blend with the adjacent red brick high school. Groves would take his experimentation with concrete further in his residential designs. In the Nordlund House, Groves employed concrete for the structure as well as the finish and decoration, creating concrete cabinets, built-ins, window and door frames, balusters, and decoration.

The school district negotiated a contract with Groves that made the cost of the design negligible unless the building was actually constructed. The hiring of an established architect was atypical for the construction of Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects, but common for Public Works Administration (PWA) projects. This "pump-primer" program aimed to stimulate the economy through large construction projects. PWA projects provided jobs for architects, general contractors, and others in the building trades. For WPA projects, the local sponsors and WPA engineers typically prepared the building plans and relied on unemployed, unskilled labor. Initially, the school district planned the gymnasium as a PWA project. The Washington County School Board received notification of a \$23,850 PWA grant on June 22, 1938. The school district then decided to try to transfer the project to the WPA, since the WPA did not require as much of a local contribution as the PWA. The school district could only afford to contribute \$26,000 to the project. If the WPA awarded more funds to the project than the PWA, then the district would be able to get a larger addition at the same cost to the high school.

On July 8, 1938, the district submitted a WPA project application (665-84-2-68) for the construction of a new gymnasium. The WPA approved the project a few days later. The new gymnasium would also include a stage, classrooms, and office space. The project included demolishing an old single story and basement portion on the north side of the high school and reclaiming these materials for use in the new structure. After demolition, WPA workers would grade the site and lay new sidewalks. WPA workers would also convert the existing high school gymnasium space, located in the basement of the original building, into classrooms. The total cost was \$54,176, with \$28,056 in federal funds and the remaining \$26,120 from the school district. Groves received an architect's fee of \$2000. According to the application:

Present school facilities are entirely inadequate due to the large increase in high school attendance the past two years. Due to drought conditions many school taxes are delinquent and it has been impossible to finance enlargement of facilities. It is preferable to operate this project as a WPA project for the reason there are no general contractors in or near Washington County. And the employment of an outside contractor would involve considerable unnecessary expense as well as making it difficult for such an outside contractor to employ Washington County people at the expense of his regular employees. Construction work on Washington County Court House by WPA has been extremely satisfactory and the same crew can successfully carry on this work.

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Construction began August 27, 1938, with an estimated completion date of April 30, 1939. According to the *Akron Newsreporter*, the project would employ forty WPA workers in shifts of twenty men with the men working eleven days each month. In September 1938, a WPA inspector reported that work on demolishing the old addition was progressing rapidly. The inspector said that the project supervisor, Chris Christensen was an experienced building contractor. The school district supplemented his WPA salary. The WPA temporarily suspended work on a road project elsewhere in the county in order to expedite construction of the gymnasium. This resulted in long travel for some workers, but the district provided transportation. In January 1939, a WPA inspector reported that the old addition had been wrecked, the basement walls had been rebuilt, and the east and north walls were complete for the first story. At this time, the operations consisted of "forming beams and placing steel for second floor and placing bar joists on first floor." The inspector concluded, "this is a good example of what can be done with experienced foremen and common labor." An inspection from October 1939 reports that the building was nearly complete and "presents a very nice appearance. . . . All work is very good."

The district held a dedication ceremony on December 14, 1939. Paul Shriver, State Administrator for the WPA, gave the dedication address. Shriver spoke about the achievements of the WPA and the cooperation between the people, Congress, and WPA workers necessary for the program to be a success. He also addressed the war in Europe, commenting that America's efforts to the put the unemployed to work on "projects for the betterment of the country" was much better than all those in Europe employed in making "instruments of destruction." More than 600 Washington County residents attended the ceremony. According to the *Akron Newsreporter*, the attendees were "unanimous in the opinion that the new building was one of the most beautiful that has been built in Akron or northeastern Colorado."

However, there was still some work to be done. WPA workers were still carrying out finish work in the building in late December 1939. In January 1940, a project inspector reported that completion of the project was delayed due to a decision to plaster additional rooms, but the project was expected to be completed by February 12, 1940.

The positive response of county residents to the Akron Gymnasium project inspired the construction of a similar structure in the nearby town of Otis. In December 1939, the school district submitted a WPA project application for the construction of a concrete gymnasium with a domed roof at the Otis High School. According to the application: "Otis is entirely without auditorium facilities. A fine gymnasium has been built at Akron and the high school system wishes to build a similar building at Otis." The district hired Eugene Groves to design the Otis Gymnasium. The Otis Gymnasium is still in use by the school district, but the district has significantly altered it. The district divided the interior of the gymnasium, and new building construction has obscured much of the exterior on the south and east. The Otis Gymnasium is smaller than the Akron Gymnasium and also more modern in appearance, with its concrete structure exposed and rounded corners suggesting an Art Moderne influence.

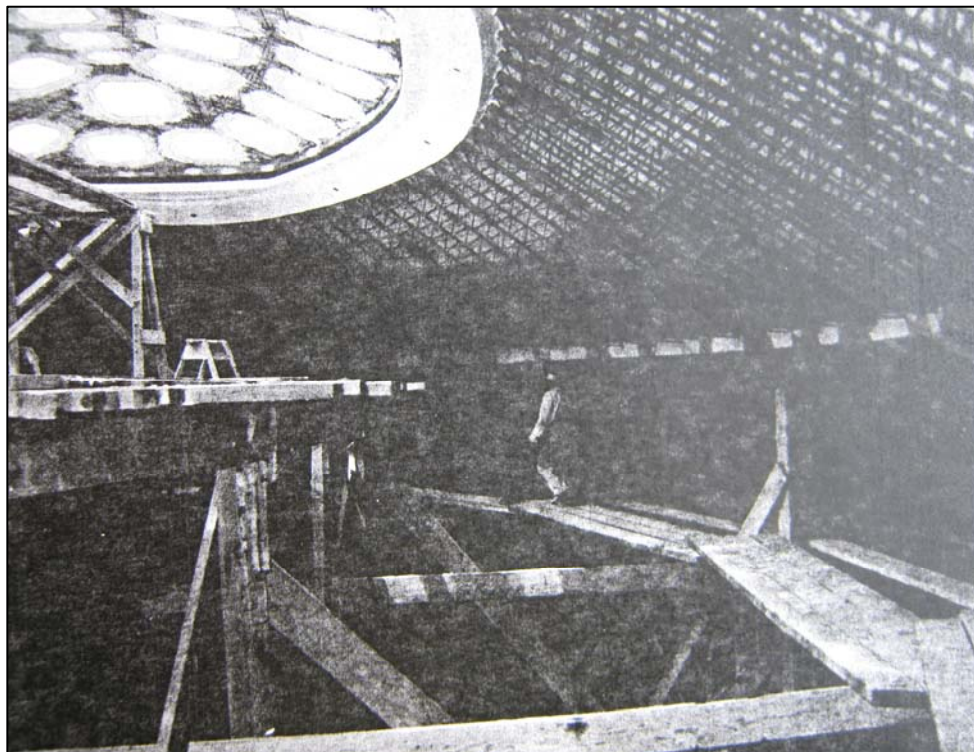
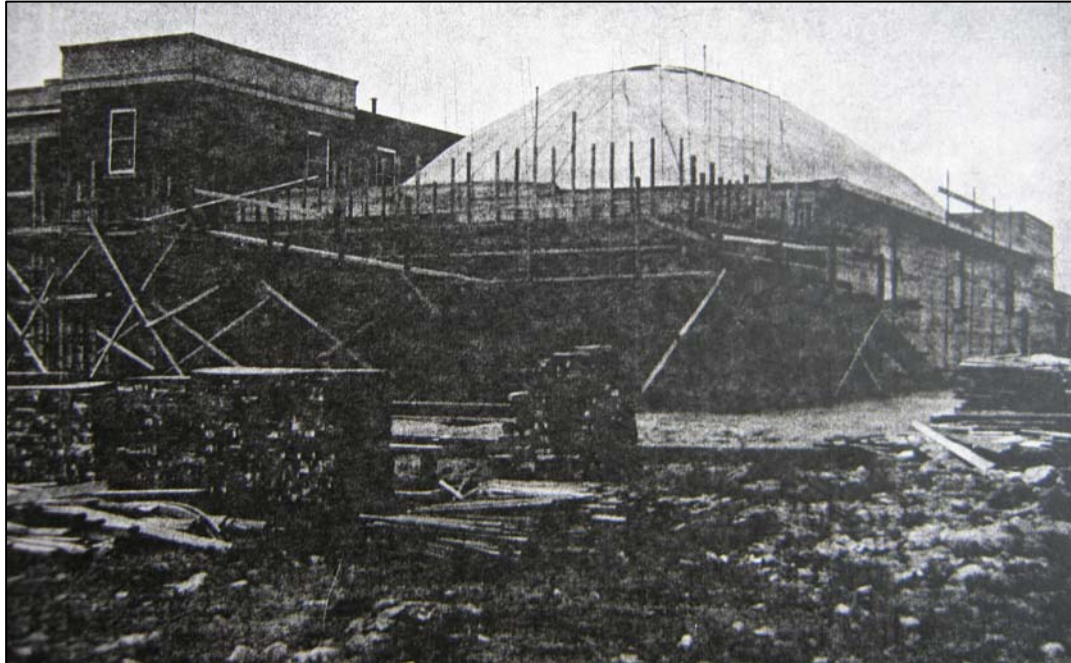
The Akron School District constructed a new high school and gymnasium on the east side of town in 1964. The old WPA gymnasium continued to serve as an auxiliary school gymnasium as well as a community building used by town sports teams, for crafts shows, and other local gatherings. The district demolished the old high school around 1970. At some point the gymnasium passed into private ownership and in recent years the gymnasium has fell into disrepair. In June 2006, the gymnasium was quit-claimed to an Akron resident who is working to restore it.

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Akron Gymnasium under construction

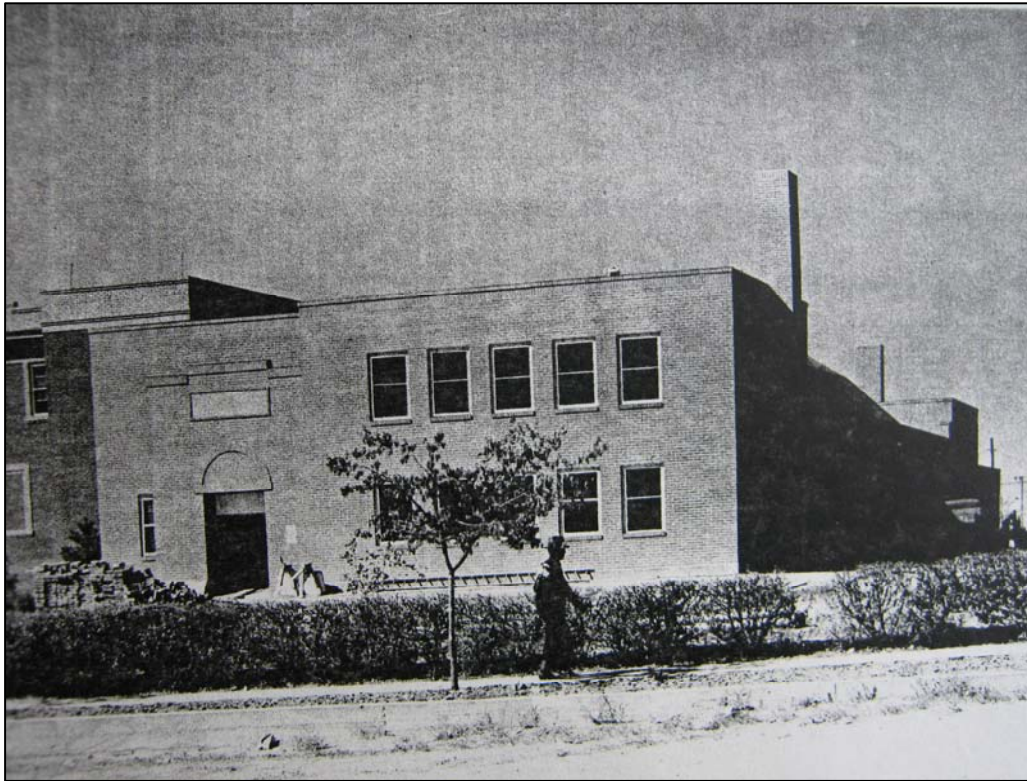


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Akron Gymnasium in 1940

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Otis Gymnasium in 2006. Designed by Eugene Groves and completed in 1941.

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## **GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

### **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The gymnasium occupies a north portion of Block 56 in the Town of Akron. The boundary is further defined as beginning at the southwest corner of the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Custer Avenue, then running west along the south side of 4<sup>th</sup> Street for 247 feet. The boundary then runs south for 120 feet. From this point the boundary runs east for 247 feet. The boundary then runs north, along the west side of Custer Avenue for 120 feet to the point of beginning.

### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary contains the land on which the gymnasium sits and excludes the recent development to the south.



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## PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property: Akron Gymnasium

Location: Akron, Colorado

Photographer: Abbey Christman

Date of Photograph: 23 August 2006

Negatives: Digital files submitted to National Register, Washington, D.C.

Photographs printed on HP Premium Photo Paper with HP 100 gray photo cartridge

Photo No.                      Photographic Information

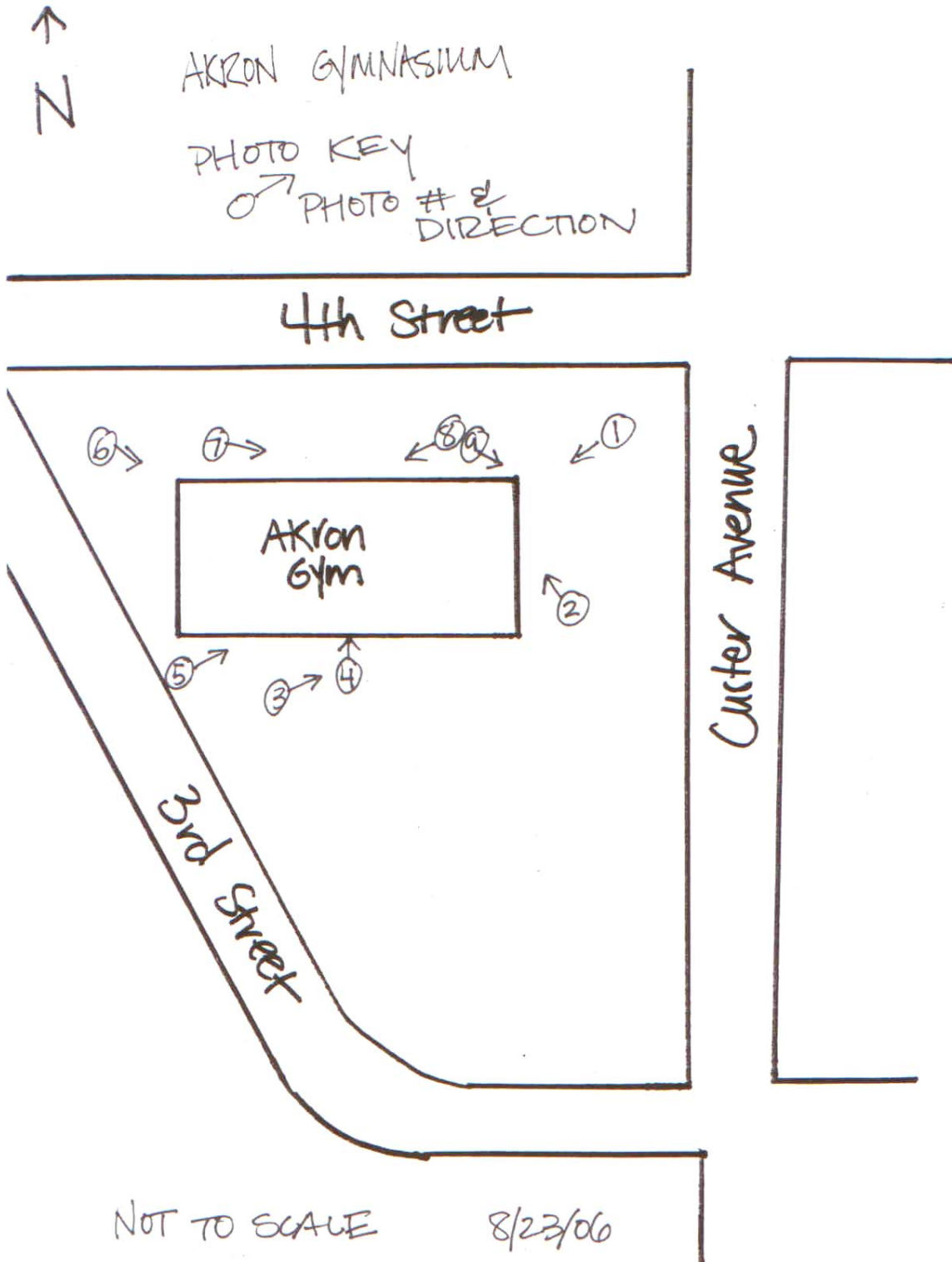
- 1 East (front) and north sides of the Akron Gymnasium. Facing southwest.
- 2 East (front) of the gymnasium showing the main entrance. Facing northwest.
- 3 South side of the gymnasium showing the gymnasium and classroom sections. Facing northeast.
- 4 South side showing domed roof of gymnasium. Facing north.
- 5 South side of gymnasium showing (left to right): garage/shop section, backstage/dressing room section, gymnasium/auditorium, and classroom section. Facing northeast.
- 6 West and north sides of the gymnasium. Facing southeast.
- 7 North side of the gymnasium showing (left to right): classroom section, gymnasium/auditorium, backstage/dressing room section, and garage/shop section. Facing southeast.
- 8 North side of gymnasium. Facing southwest.
- 9 North side of gymnasium. Facing southeast.
- 10 Interior of gymnasium showing the stage. Facing west.
- 11 Interior of gymnasium. Facing east.
- 12 Detail of domed roof and skylights.

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NOT TO SCALE

8/23/06



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**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**

Akron Quadrangle, Colorado  
7.5 Minute Series

UTM: Zone 13 / 651837 E / 4447032 N (NAD27)

PLSS: 6th PM, T2N, R52W, Sec. 8

Elevation: 4667 feet

