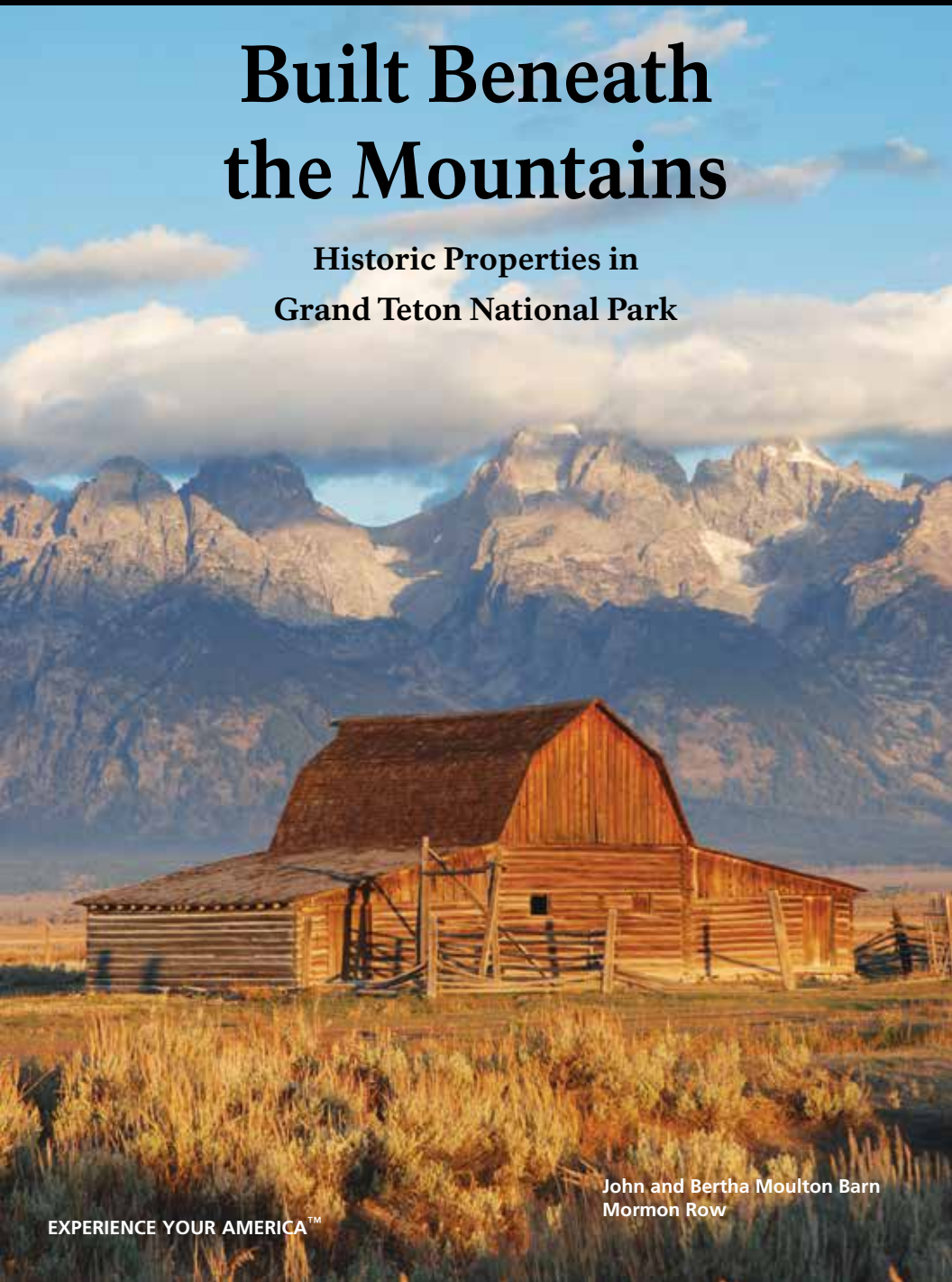
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway

Built Beneath the Mountains

Historic Properties in Grand Teton National Park



John and Bertha Moulton Barn
Mormon Row

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An Overview to Historic Properties

Historic structures and properties in Grand Teton National Park stand in silent testimony to the stories of human exploration, pioneering settlement, ranching, conservation and park protection. Primarily constructed of logs, using local materials, historic properties throughout the valley of Jackson Hole reflect local craftsmanship and unique architecture developed in isolated conditions.

Preserved in National Historic Landmarks, historic districts and cultural landscapes, historic properties in the park reflect the human spirit of "putting down roots" and living free in a remote and wild country.

History is not the primary reason visitors flock to Grand Teton National Park. Yet the park contains hundreds of places that tell the human story of the park and connect to American history. The National Park Service protects these structures as carefully as their famous wildlife and scenery.

Cultural Resources Numbers:

- 695 historic properties in 44 districts.
- All properties are eligible for, or listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Properties are classified by their condition as 'good, fair or poor.'
- More than half of the park's properties are rated as being in 'good' condition.

The valley opened to homesteading under the Homestead Act of 1862. Many homesteaders eventually sold their property to John D. Rockefeller, Jr. through his Snake River Land Company.

Use this booklet as your guide to visit a settler's cabin or the original ranger station while you learn about the past and look toward the future of preserving this place.

Jackson Lake Lodge Back Deck

White Grass Dude Ranch Cabin undergoing rehabilitation work in 2008.

Management

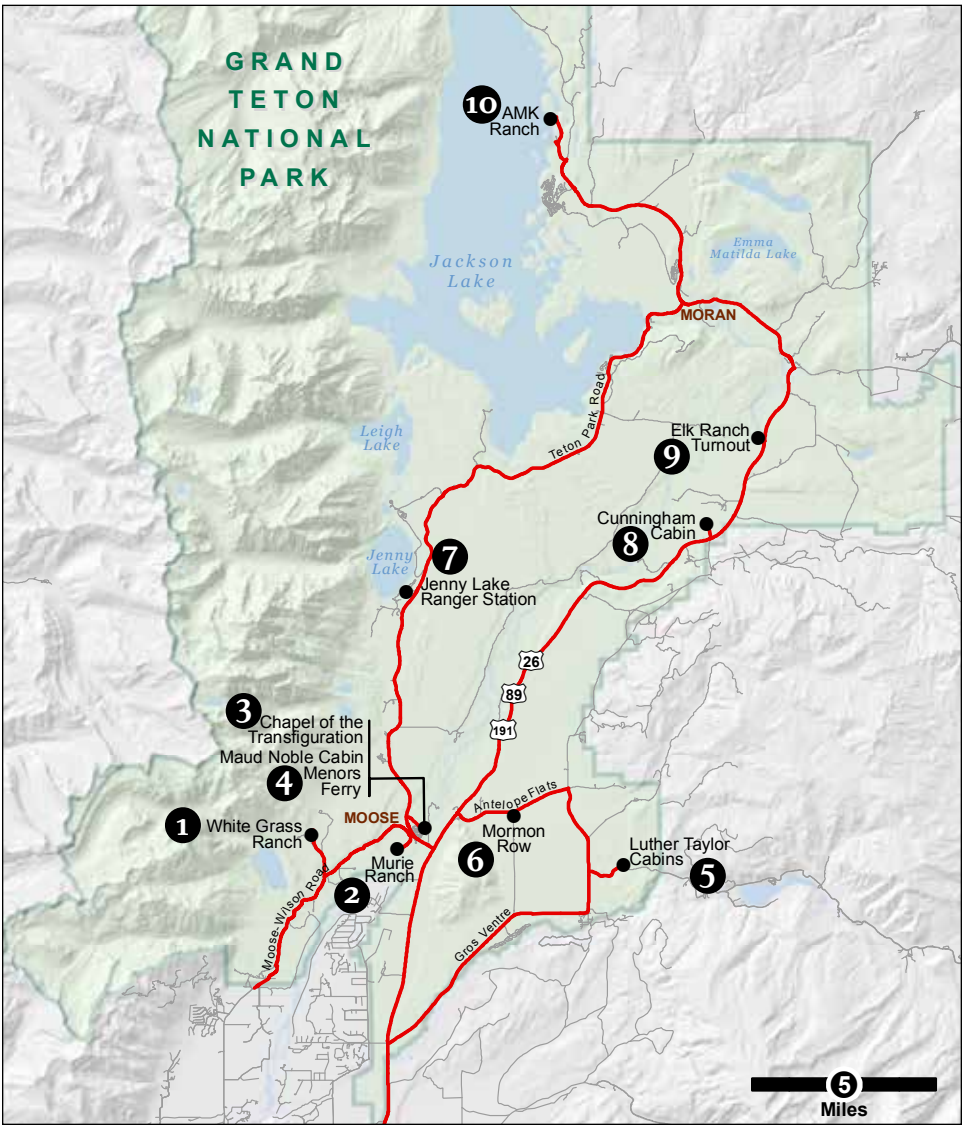
In an effort to preserve Grand Teton National Park's historic properties, the Historic Properties Management Plan guides management of historic structures and coordinates funding for continuing education and resource protection. Currently, more than half of the park's historic properties are rated in 'good condition' with many serving as offices, housing, guest rooms, living history exhibits, education centers, agricultural purposes and storage. Structures rated in 'poor condition' are stabilized preventing further deterioration by maintaining the structure's exterior, or bracing remnants preserving their station in the cultural landscape.

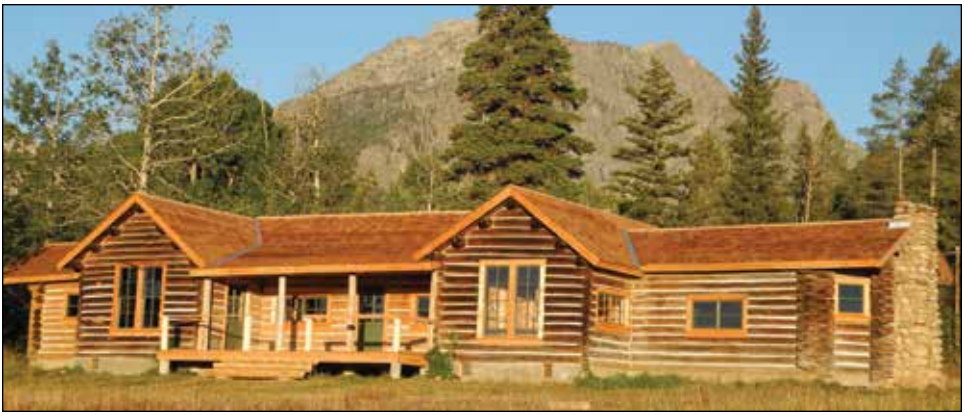
Cultural Resources Defined:

- **National Register of Historic Places:** The official list of the nation's historic places worthy of protection. To be eligible a property must be at least 50 years old, retain its original appearance and have historical significance.
- **National Historic Landmark:** A nationally significant historic place that possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. There are only 2,500 nationwide including two in Grand Teton National Park—the Murie Ranch and Jackson Lake Lodge.
- **Cultural Landscape:** A geographic area, including natural and cultural resources, associated with a historic event, activity or person.
- **Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:** The National Park Service standards for maintaining, repairing and replacing historic materials.

A Driving Tour

Visit the park's many historic districts to learn about the hardships homesteaders endured, the dude ranch period, the events leading to park expansion, the early conservation movement and the evolution of the park into a world-class destination. The number next to each district on the map corresponds to a narrative in this booklet.





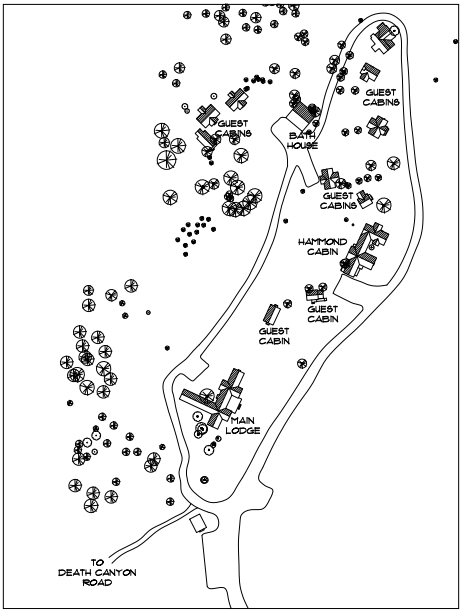
White Grass Dude Ranch Main Lodge after preservation.

❶ White Grass Dude Ranch

The White Grass Dude Ranch is an iconic example of dude ranching in Jackson Hole. Homesteaded in 1913 by Harold Hammond and George Bispham, White Grass operated as a cattle ranch until 1919 when they converted operations to dude ranching. The National Park Service purchased the ranch in 1956, but the family retained a life lease. Dude ranching continued at White Grass until 1985, making it the longest serving active dude ranch in Jackson Hole at the time.

In 2005, the National Park Service partnered with the National Trust for Historic Preservation to rehabilitate the ranch. The property is now serves as a training center called the Western Center for Historic Preservation. Craftsmen learn skills to preserve and maintain historic properties. None of the buildings is currently open to the public, but visitors may tour the property. In the future, the Main Lodge will house an interpretive exhibit.

Riding horses, White Grass Dude Ranch.



To reach the ranch, turn northwest off the Moose-Wilson Road toward the Death Canyon Trailhead and continue 1.5 miles.

❷ Murie Ranch

The Murie Ranch—once home to Olaus and Mardy Murie—was a vital retreat for the American conservation movement. The Muries purchased the STS Ranch in 1945, and under their ownership, the 77-acre property became the unofficial headquarters of the Wilderness Society. Olaus as the society's director and wife Mardy were crucial to the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

In 1968, Mardy Murie sold the ranch to the National Park Service, but continued to live on the property until her death in 2003. Rehabilitation work began in 1997. Today, the Murie Ranch, a National Historic Landmark, is part of the Teton Science Schools organization (TSS). As a park partner, TSS offers educational and research opportunities in the park, as well as seasonal tours of the homestead. The Murie Ranch is a short walk south from the Craig Thomas Discovery and Visitor Center in Moose. Trail guide available.

Olaus Murie working in his studio.

Olaus Murie used this cabin as his office and studio for sketching wildlife.

❸ Chapel of the Transfiguration

The Chapel of the Transfiguration, recognized for its western-craftsman architecture, was important to the local community during the settlement and early tourist eras. Today, one of the park's classic views is through the altar window framing the Grand Teton beyond.

Maud Nobel donated land for the chapel to St. John's Episcopal Church. The chapel served employees and guests from the nearby dude ranches. Inspired by other religious buildings across Wyoming, local craftsmen designed, built and furnished the chapel in 1925. Open to the public, the chapel offers weekly services during summer. The chapel—owned by St. John's Episcopal Church—is not part of the park's property management plan.

To reach the Chapel of the Transfiguration, turn east off the Teton Park Road just north of the Moose Entrance Station.

Bill Menor's General Store

4 Menors Ferry & Maud Noble Cabins

The Menors Ferry/Maud Noble Cabins Historic District reflects broad patterns of settlement, agriculture, transportation, conservation and historic preservation. Bill Menor homesteaded the land in 1894 and began ferry operations across the Snake River. His ferry was one of three in the valley providing critical links across the river. Always the entrepreneur, Menor also cultivated crops, and operated a general store and post office.

Bill Menor operating his ferry.

Did You Know?

During huckleberry season, Bill Menor would charge "huckleberry rates" on his ferry. Travelers would pay cash for their ride across and pay in huckleberries for their return.

Holiday Menor, Bill's brother, canned huckleberries and concocted a home-brewed wine of berries, raisins, prunes and beets.

After Menor retired to California, Maud Noble purchased his property and business in 1918. On July 26, 1923, she hosted an important meeting. Prominent business owners, local ranchers, and Yellowstone Superintendent Horace Albright, gathered to discuss concerns about the area's changing character. They sought to protect Jackson Hole from further development and preserve their way of life. Albright later toured the area with John D. Rockefeller, Jr. prompting Rockefeller to purchase privately owned lands and donate them for the expansion of Grand Teton National Park in 1950.

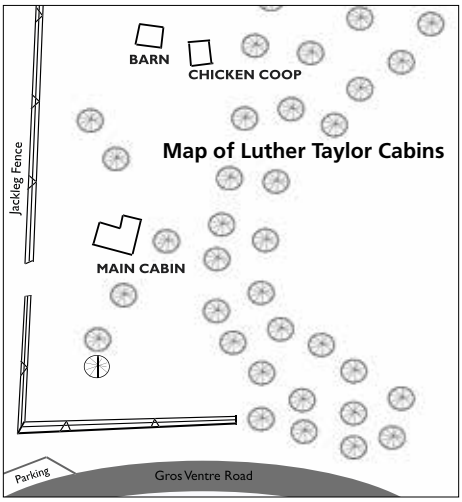
From 1942 to 1953, Jackson Hole Preserve, Inc., a Rockefeller company, funded restoration of the homestead buildings and constructed a replica ferry completing the park's earliest preservation work. The general store is open in summer and the ferry operates as conditions permit. Trail guide available.

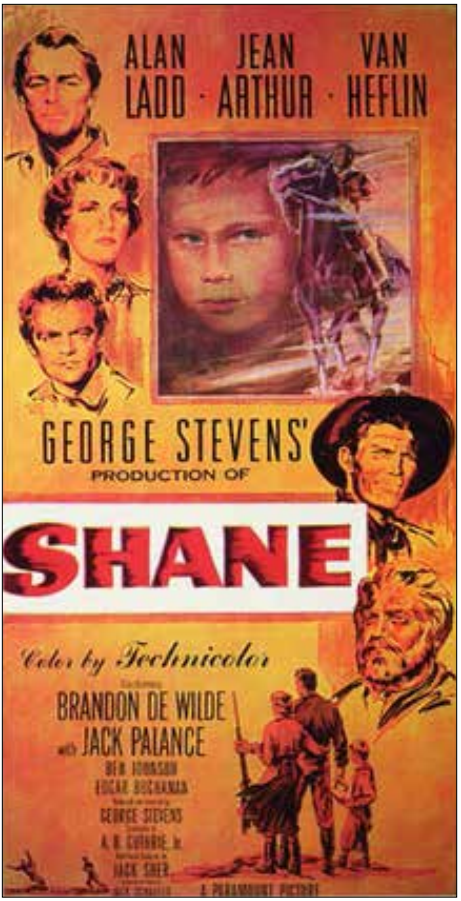
To reach the Menors Ferry/Maud Noble Cabins Historic District, turn east off the Teton Park Road just north of the Moose Entrance Station and follow the signs.

❺ Luther Taylor Cabins

The Luther Taylor Cabins are among the most recognized historic properties in the park. The abandoned cabins provided the backdrop for a scene in the 1951 Paramount Productions movie Shane. Nominated for Best Picture in 1953, the film is a hallmark of the western film genre. The scene shot at the Luther Taylor cabins is brief but crucial. Witnesses attest that little was done to the homestead for the movie.

John Erwin first homesteaded the Luther Taylor property around 1910. Erwin likely constructed two structures still on the site—the barn and the chicken coop. After his death, Erwin's children sold the property to Luther Taylor in 1923 who later sold to Chambers in 1932. The Chambers family still owned the property during the filming of Shane. Today only rustic remnants remain highlighting the hardships facing homesteaders and providing a striking photographic foreground to the Teton Range.





Hollywood movie poster for *Shane* (1953). Much of the movie was filmed in the valley including a scene shot at the Luther Taylor Cabins.

To reach the Luther Taylor Cabins, turn east onto the Gros Ventre River Road. The cabins are on the north side of the road.

John and Bertha Moulton House

6 Mormon Row

The Mormon Row Historic District captures Mormon settlement efforts in the valley. First settled in 1896, Mormon Row was a successful farming community where homesteaders practiced diversified agriculture, neighbors worked together on community projects such as irrigation, and multiple generations lived together. The homesteaders established the town of Grovont with a post office, church and school. The people who lived on Mormon Row were self-sufficient. They made their own clothing, bedding and soap, canned produce, churned butter and plucked their own chickens.

These hardy settlers adapted to the valley's short growing season, but the 1919 drought, the collapse of the cattle market after World War I, and the market crash of 1929 made it difficult to sustain their farms and families. In 1930, the Snake River Land Company met with Mormon Row residents in the local Latter Day Saints Church. All but one sold to the company with many securing life leases to their properties. By 1950, only a few settlers lived on Mormon Row. Today, only one original family still lives along Mormon Row seasonally. The architecture of Mormon Row typifies local vernacular architecture and early community structures in the west.

Access Mormon Row, from Antelope Flats Road. Trail guide available.

Did You Know?

In 1927, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. founded the Snake River Land Company to purchase private land in Jackson Hole. In 1950, after much opposition and negotiating, Rockefeller donated over 32,000 acres to expand Grand Teton National Park.

❼ Jenny Lake Ranger Station and Visitor Center

The Jenny Lake Historic District includes today's visitor center and ranger station. Each of these cabins played a major role in the park's long history of visitor services. Lee Manges built his homestead cabin—today's ranger station—near Windy Point. In 1930, the park moved the cabin to the shores of Jenny Lake to serve as the ranger station and museum. Fritiof Fryxell, the park's first ranger, oversaw operations. Finally, the park opened a second visitor center at Moose in the early 1960s.

Harrison Crandall built his photography studio near the Cathedral Group

Jenny Lake Ranger Station, circa 1930

Fritiof Fryxell and Phil Smith with two other rangers, circa 1930.

Harrison Crandall standing in front of his snowbound studio near the Cathedral Group Turnout.

The Crandall Studio now serves as the Jenny Lake Visitor Center.

Turnout and moved it to the shores of Jenny Lake in 1931. His nationally recognized photographs helped popularize Jackson Hole as a vacation destination. Since then, the studio operated as a general store for several years before reopening as the Jenny Lake Visitor Center in 1994.

A windowed cupola breaks the Crandall Studio roofline and acts as a skylight, an unusual feature for this region. Another decorative element is a king post truss filled with diagonal logs in the gable end above the entrance of each cabin.

These cabins are located at South Jenny Lake, north of Moose and west of the Teton Park Road.

8 Cunningham Cabin

Among the valley's earliest homesteaders, Margaret and John Pierce Cunningham settled this property in the 1880s, building a cabin, corrals, barns, sheds, chicken coop and outhouse. The Cunninghams raised cattle and cultivated hay, eventually expanding their 160-acre homestead to 540 acres. As cattle-ranching hit an economic low in 1925, Cunningham and Elk Ranch owner Si Ferrin co-authored a petition proposing a buyout of the valley's ranches to set them aside as a recreation area. In 1928, Cunningham, along with many others, sold property to the Snake River Land Company.

Pierce Cunningham

The remaining cabin on Cunningham's homestead is a dog-trot style building consisting of two cabins connected by a breezeway under one common roof. The design was typical on the East coast and later in this area.

The cabin is south of Moran Junction on US 26, 89/191. Trail guide available.

Cunningham Cabin, an early 20th century dog-trot style cabin.

9 Elk Ranch

Elk Ranch is the park's last operating example of an irrigated cattle and hay ranch. The ranch reflects the history of Jackson Hole from early 20th century subsistence agriculture, hay ranching, cattle grazing, conservation and recreational park use. Rancher Josiah David (Si) Ferrin consolidated several homesteads to establish one of the valley's largest cattle ranches. Although only a few ranch buildings remain, the property retains the cattle guards, fences, corral and pastures of a working ranch.

Elk Ranch, 1943

Purchasing the 2,425-acre Elk Ranch in 1928, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. chose to continue ranching operations as a way of "perpetuating the picturesque features of Jackson Hole as a cattle country."

Did You Know?

Settlers built roads to the northern part of the valley by the late 1800s, but travel was difficult. In 1918, the local newspaper reported that Mrs. Nelson of Moran made her first trip into Jackson in four years even though she lived only 30 miles away.

While most properties purchased by his Snake River Land Company (SRLC) were cleared of buildings and returned to their "natural" state, Elk Ranch remained an active ranch due to its rich hayfields, irrigation system and proximity to the SRLC's headquarters.

Elk Ranch, 1948

As one of the last properties permitted for grazing in Grand Teton National Park, Elk Ranch spotlights the issue of grazing on national park land. The park once allowed grazing on about 69,000 acres.

Enjoy the view from the Elk Ranch Flats Turnout off US 26/89/191 south of Moran Junction, where livestock, bison, elk and pronghorn frequently graze.

Bison and pronghorn graze at Elk Ranch Flats.

10 AMK Ranch

The AMK Ranch represents the initial phase of vacation homes in Jackson Hole. Homesteaded by John Sargent in 1890, little remains of his lodge and store that served travelers on the road to Yellowstone. All current buildings date to the W. Lewis Johnson era (1926-1936) and the Alfred Berol era (1936-1976). Both Johnson and Berol built large log vacation homes representing two distinct periods of rustic architecture as well as various other cabins and outbuildings.

Berol Lodge at the AMK Ranch

Berol, president of the Eagle Pencil Company, decorated his lodge with "pencil themed" fixtures including the wrought iron and log chandeliers. The Berols—Alfred, Madeleine, and son, Kenneth (AMK)—sold the property to the National Park Service in 1976 for more than $3 million and a life estate. Today, the ranch houses the University of Wyoming-National Park Service Research Station, hosting researchers studying the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Turn west off US 89/191/287 toward Leek's Marina and follow signs to the research station.

Beaver Creek #10 undergoing expansion by the CCC in the 1930s.

Other Historic Structures

Many other historic properties populate the park. Some are easily accessible while others, like backcountry patrol cabins, require effort to reach. The earliest historic structures are small, log cabins built from local materials to suit the needs of settlers such as Geraldine Lucas. Her homestead cabins occupy a beautiful meadow with stunning views of the Grand Teton. As dude ranching became popular, proprietors built log cabins with artistic flairs such as porches and windows. Classic examples of dude ranch cabins are the Danny Ranch (today's Jenny Lake Lodge) and the Bar BC Dude Ranch.

Bar BC Dude Ranch

Jenny Lake Lodge

After establishment of Grand Teton National Park in 1929, the Beaver Creek area housed employees and offered visitor services. The building known as Beaver Creek #10 was originally a Forest Service ranger station predating the park. After remodeling and expansion, the building served as the first park headquarters. In the 1930s, the young men in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) remodeled Beaver Creek #10,

Civilian Conservation Corps crew (CCC) at camp.

Exum Mountain Guides headquarters: a former CCC camp.

and built employee housing at Beaver Creek, bathhouses at String and Jenny lakes, and a mess hall and shower house that now serve as headquarters for Exum Mountain Guides.

After World War II, an increasing numbers of short-term guests began visiting the park, leading to the construction of auto camps such as The Highlands and Kimmel Kabins. These cabins currently house seasonal park employees. A common practice in the valley has been to re-purpose and move cabins from early lodges, dude ranches and auto camps to new locations such as the Colter Bay Cabin accommodations.

Many park buildings in the Colter Bay area grew out of the Mission 66 program, a nationwide effort by the National Park Service to build facilities using a standard layout. The Mission 66 program supplied parks with standardized blueprints to construct much-needed modern visitor centers, ranger stations and employee housing. The goal was to complete these new buildings by 1966, the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service. A brochure about the Mission 66 program is available at park visitor centers. As you travel, look for these buildings in other parks.

Colter Bay Visitor Center: a Mission 66 project.

Did You Know?

Dude ranching in Jackson Hole started in the early 20th century. Ranchers struggled to make a living raising livestock and began providing accommodations for paying guests.

Dude ranches catered to wealthy Easterner's idea of the "old west." Guests, or "dudes," sought the western experience, including rustic accommodations, horseback riding, fishing and evening entertainment.

Jackson Lake Lodge, circa 1955

With its concrete textured walls, Jackson Lake Lodge is the first modern lodge built in a national park. Constructed from 1953 to 1955, architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood designed this famous lodge. Underwood also designed the Yosemite National Park Ahwanee Lodge in the 1920s. Today, the Jackson Lake Lodge is one of the park's two National Historic Landmarks.

Jackson Lake Lodge Great Room

Many historic buildings remain in Grand Teton National Park highlighting the park's rich cultural history. If you wish to visit some of these additional historic structures, please stop by a visitor center and ask for directions. More information is online: www.nps.gov/grte/learn/historyculture/cultural.htm