NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 10024-0018
(Revised Feb. 1993)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1280

RECEIVED 2280
DEC 18 2009
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places 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 Bovill Opera House

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 412 2nd Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Bovill N/A vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Latah code 057 zip code 83806

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.)

Dec 8, 2009

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
KENNETH C. REID, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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 this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Joe Edson K. Beall 1.27.10

✓ 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:)_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- x private
- __ public-local
- __ public-State
- __ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- x building(s)
- __ district
- __ site
- __ structure
- __ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

Motion Picture Theater Buildings in Idaho (1897-1949)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/
theater

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls WOOD/weatherboard
roof METAL/tin
other

Narrative Description

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

x **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" on all 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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1911-1955

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

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 _ Other State agency
_ 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:
x State Historic Preservation Office

_ Federal agency
_ Local government
_ University
_ Other

Name of repository:

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	1/1	5/4/6/1/2/5	5/1/8/9/7/2/5	B	/	//////	//////
C	/	//////	//////	D	/	//////	//////

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Bovill Opera House is located at 412 2nd Avenue, at the southeast corner of 2nd Avenue and Pine Street, in Bovill, Idaho; Block 8, Lot 7, Bovill.

__ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the city lot on which the Bovill Opera House sits and that is historically associated with the property.

__ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Suzanne Julin

organization _____ date _____

street & number 1001 E. Broadway-2, PMB 608 telephone 406-544-8606

city or town Missoula state MT zip code 59802

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/or 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

name Lloyd Hall

street & number PO Box 617 telephone _____

city or town Bovill state ID zip code 83806

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Narrative Description

The Bovill Opera House is a long, narrow, two-story frame building, located on the southeast corner of Second Avenue and Pine Street in the small town of Bovill, Idaho. Bovill is located in northeastern Latah County in Idaho's panhandle, about three miles from the county's border with Clearwater County. The town is in a striking setting, with timbered areas at its very edges combined with expansive views of the surrounding country. The Bovill Opera House is located across Pine Street from the end of Main Street, which curves from the north. Main Street holds most of the business buildings in Bovill. A small shed is located behind the Bovill Opera House and residential housing is located on surrounding properties.

The Bovill Opera House faces west and measures 29' by 80'. The building sits on a concrete foundation and is sided in unpainted, horizontal wood clapboard. The building has a front-gabled roof clad in corrugated metal; the front façade features a tall false front. Boards near the top of the false front are deteriorating; some of these were replaced in the 1940s or 1950s. All windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash, though the glazing in all windows is either broken or missing altogether, and many are boarded shut.

Original centered, double entrance doors are at the floor level on the front façade. The steps leading to them are gone, as is a covered entry extension. An early photograph of the Bovill Opera House shows this long entry extension and a large poster and sign "Opera House" on the north side. According to Lloyd Hall, who bought the building in the 1940s, the entryway originally had lights running around the roof, but it was removed during the 1930s.[1]

Fenestration on the front façade is symmetrical, with three windows on both the first and second levels (though these are not precisely aligned above one another). The window directly above the entrance doors is partially hidden by a metal sign reading, "Bovill Historical Museum." On the north edge of the facade, a wooden ladder is attached to the building and extends from the lower window up to nearly the top of the false front. A utility box is to the south of the door and light fixtures and cords are strung over the door.

The north side of the building has a set of double doors approximately three-quarters of the way down from the front of the building. This entrance would have been used to move equipment and firewood in and out of the building. The second story has a line of seven symmetrically placed windows. A mural has been placed off-center below the seven boarded or partially boarded windows on the second level. The mural represents the surrounding countryside and the building's history as a movie theater.

On the rear (east elevation) of the building, fenestration is less symmetrical, with 2 windows - slightly larger than all the others on the building – located on the ground level near each corner of the elevation. On the second level, a single window is located near the northern edge of the wall. A doorway that

originally provided access to the second level of the Opera House is boarded up near the southern edge of the wall. The exterior stairs that originally led to that door on the second level are gone, and access is currently gained only by extension ladder through windows that are not boarded up. A small pitched-roof shed stands immediately behind the building, but is not attached to it; it is not a contributing element on the property.

On the south elevation, a brick chimney runs up the wall, but no longer pierces the roofline. A single side door is located immediately west of the chimney. The second story has six windows, one located to the east of the chimney and five located to its west.

Inside the front doors is a narrow entry with tongue-and-groove wainscoting painted blue. A semi-circular ticket booth with small windows opening to the front and the right side is centered in the entry area. A large wooden show bill case is located on the north wall, but is missing its glass. Wooden doors on each side of the ticket booth open to short flights of stairs that lead to the auditorium portion of the theater. Curtains separate the theater from the stairway to the projection booth. The walls of the projection booth are lined with lead and asbestos. Walls are covered in fiberboard with many signatures on them. Two Simplex film projectors and chairs remain in place. Small areas to each side and below the projection booth may have been used for "crying" or smoking rooms.

The auditorium section of the theater has a slightly sloping hardwood floor covered with cloth carpeting. Fifteen rows of original seats are separated by a center aisle. The walls feature tongue-and-groove wainscoting topped by a decorative rail, with plastered walls above. The walls are decorated with murals painted in the 1930s by itinerant artist, Joe Breckenridge. The murals depict landscapes including a desert scene, a farm in snow scene, lakeshore scenes, a riverside scene, and a forest home scene, all done in delicate colors. Square beams have been added across the ceiling and down to the wainscoting level to provide structural support. Water damage to the ceiling and the upper walls has caused ceiling plaster to fall to the floor.

In the front of the stage there is a small space originally used by musicians. To the left, an organ is still in place as well as the wood burning stove and chimney pipe. The area surrounding the chimney is deteriorating. The stage has a square proscenium with stylized floral stenciling, also done by Joe Breckenridge. To each side are additional murals featuring outdoor scenes. The floor of the stage has buckled due to water infiltration. Six steps lead up to the stage and backstage area. The backstage is used for storage.

The upper floor consists of a single large room; it has no ceiling and trusses are visible. The hardwood floor is in place, although it, too, has sustained water damage.

A small metal shed is located immediately adjacent, but not attached, to the rear (east side) of the Bovill Opera House. The shed is not a contributing resource to the historic property.

Summary:

The Bovill Opera House, while perhaps only in fair condition, retains excellent historic integrity. The building retains its original spaces, including the ticket booth, projection booth, auditorium and seating, Proscenium, and stage. No substantial remodels have occurred to adversely affect the building. Therefore it meets the registration requirements established by the Multiple Property Documentation, "Motion Picture Theaters in Idaho (1897-1949)."

Endnotes

1. Opera House, Bovill, Photographs, Special Collections, PG 12-128, University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho; Lloyd Hall, interviewed by Linda Morton-Keithley, Boise: Idaho Oral History Center, August 17, 1997.

Statement of Significance

The Bovill Opera House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A for its significance in the area of Entertainment/Recreation. The property falls under the Multiple Property Document "Motion Picture Theater Buildings in Idaho (1897-1949)," as it historically exhibited motion pictures during the stated period of significance, and that motion picture exhibition was a substantial part of the history of the building. In addition, the Opera House was an important center of social and recreational life in the community of Bovill. The period of significance is 1911 to 1955, beginning with the first recorded notation of its existence and ending when the establishment closed its doors for good. The Bovill Opera House served for a half-century as an entertainment and social center for the town of Bovill and its surrounding communities. Besides offering movies and live entertainment, its second floor served at various times as a dance hall, a miniature golf course, and a roller-skating rink, expanding its role in the social life of Bovill.[1]

Historical Background:

The town of Bovill is named for Hugh Bovill, an early settler. Bovill was a British citizen, the youngest son of Sir William Bovill. He came to the United States as a young man and worked on ranches in Colorado and in Nebraska where he met his wife, Charlotte Emily Robinson. He made his way to Idaho in the late 19th century, bought a homestead in northwestern Latah County in 1899, and subsequently established a ranch here. Seeing the interest hunters and fishermen took in the area, he expanded the ranch's original cabin into a year-round hotel. The family's enterprise grew after the Potlatch Lumber Company purchased surrounding land, and Bovill was incorporated in 1907. Hugh Bovill built a warehouse and store and became postmaster of the new town; the family donated land for a park. But the Bovills became disillusioned by the destruction of timber, prompted by railroad construction, as well as the rowdy nature of the lumber camps with the proliferation of saloons and bordellos in Bovill. They sold their property and moved to Coeur d'Alene in 1911, but Bovill, as a center for logging operations and a shipping point for the Potlatch sawmill, grew to be the third largest town in the county by 1914.[2]

The precise construction date of the Bovill Opera House is undocumented, but the few existing issues of The *Bovill Herald* from 1911 to 1913 contain notices of social and civic functions at "the opera house." In the August 19, 1911 issue, the paper notified people of a dance at the opera house on Saturday night. On December 2, 1911, the paper reported a good time had by all at a Thanksgiving dance with music furnished by the Canfield orchestra, and on December 30, 1911, the paper described a successful Christmas dance held at the opera house. The February 3, 1912 issue discussed a private soiree given by Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Grant in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Giles. The hall was decorated with carnations and roses. A few weeks later, the opera house management gave a masquerade ball, and early in March the All Star Comedy Trio presented performances in the hall on two consecutive evenings, followed by dances. In April, a hearing was held at the opera house for three men charged with shipping a barrel of

whiskey in on the train. Later that month, women of the Catholic Church raised thirty dollars by giving a dance and luncheon at the opera house.[3]

The *Bovill Record* of September 5, 1913, states that "the opera house improvements are well underway, the stage having been perfected, the interior of walls stained an appropriate color, and an attractive front entrance in process of erection."[4] The mention of the "attractive front entrance" is evidence that the existing opera house is the building discussed so often in the Bovill newspaper. An early photograph of the Bovill Opera House shows a long entry extension and a large poster and sign "Opera House" on the north side. Additional information about the opera house comes through descriptions of fires. John Miller notes that when the opera house escaped a 1912 fire, the owner celebrated by throwing a dance for the community. Another fire in July 1914, burned Bovill's main business block; a photograph taken before the fire shows wood frame business buildings with false fronts constructed in much the same style as the opera house. After the fire, Bovill business buildings were built of brick. The existence of the wooden opera house on the edge of the business district, indicates it escaped the 1914 fire and helps to place its construction before that date.[5]

The 1916 Sanborn map of Bovill shows the building at its present location and labeled "Moving Picture Hall." [6] Before Bovill had electricity, the theater maintained its own generator on a concrete pad. Besides showing movies once a week, it also featured stage shows and had circular stage lights in various colors. A flat area in front of the stage held musicians. The Taylor Company appeared frequently, performing minstrel shows and camping in the yard behind the theater. The theater was also the site of school plays and other community activities, and served as Bovill's social center. John B. Miller, who wrote a history of Bovill, notes that "the town theater, in its greatest period of popularity, belonged to Lee Denevan."[7] Denevan apparently took ownership of the property sometime after 1917, but eventually sold the business to the North Coast Theater Company, a Seattle, Washington firm.[8]

By the 1930s, Bovill had about 1,000 residents. The Bovill Opera House was showing movies with sound, and the theater was such a popular gathering place for Bovill citizens that most of them had a particular seat which they occupied at every showing. A young Bovill man, Edward Hall, worked for the North Coast Theater Company, showing movies in Elk River, Deary, and Clarkia as well as Bovill. He carried the equipment, films, and a screen in his Model A Ford. He also managed the Bovill Opera House and at one point replaced the original heavy stage curtains that had to be pulled back by hand with a lighter curtain operated by a motor system he developed. Young men from Civilian Conservation Corps camps in the area, as well as local residents, patronized the movies. Meanwhile, the upstairs was still being used for Saturday night dances, and sometime during the decade it was set up as a miniature golf course. In the late 1930s, Lloyd Hall, Edward's brother, opened a roller-skating rink on the second floor and charged children to skate there. He operated the rink through his high school years.[9]

In the late 1930s or early 1940s, Joe Breckenridge came to Bovill and lived in a tent outside the old hospital, which Lloyd and Edward Hall's father had purchased and converted to apartments. He remained in Bovill for less than a year but left his mark on the town. To earn room, board and incidentals, Breckenridge painted murals on walls. He painted murals in most of the rooms in the hospital and murals on both side walls of the theater and on either side of the stage. He also did the stylized floral stenciling around the proscenium. Breckenridge painted murals in most of the businesses in town at that time, and also did free-standing paintings on plywood. He advertised his talents by painting waterfalls on cigarette papers and handing them out.[10]

Lloyd Hall bought the building and equipment after the theater closed prior to World War II, and he reopened it again shortly after the war ended. He ran the projectors, his wife sold tickets, and they gave young people free movie tickets in exchange for their services as ushers and cleaners. He ordered movies through a film service in Seattle, and they were delivered by mail. The service also printed publicity posters for the theater, which were delivered door-to-door by youngsters in Bovill. Local audiences were too small to pay for first-run movies, but older movies - westerns and thrillers - were popular with the movie-goers. The building was always heated by wood: at first with a pot-bellied stove, and later with a double-barrel stove with a fan behind it to move the heat. The theater never had indoor plumbing, but had an outhouse in the backyard at one time.[11]

Lloyd Hall closed the theater in 1955, as television began drawing patrons away and he and his wife wanted more free time. Prior to that, they were running movies on Saturday and Sunday evenings as well as a matinee. The building was locked with its contents intact and is used for storage of various items collected by the Hall family. Despite the "Bovill Historical Museum" sign currently on the front of the building, it was apparently never used as a museum on a consistent basis.[12]

Summary Statement of Significance

The Bovill Opera House is an excellent example of the development of a small-town entertainment center in the first half of the twentieth century. The opera house provided a community gathering place, opportunities for dancing, miniature golf and roller-skating, and a venue for live entertainment and motion pictures in a relatively isolated rural area. The available Sanborn maps for 1916 and 1928, show a small community with few other social distractions save a couple of billiard halls. For nearly five decades, the Opera House was a significant social center of Bovill, providing a place for residents to gather, recreate and catch up on the latest movies. Its use as a motion picture exhibition hall for a substantial portion of its existence qualifies it for listing under the Multiple Property Document "Motion Picture Theaters in Idaho (1897-1949)."

Endnotes

1. Lloyd Hall, interviewed by Linda Morton-Keithley, August 27, 1997, OH 1325, Idaho Oral History Center, Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, Idaho, transcript pp. 5, 22.

2. Mary Reed, "The Outdoor Life in Latah County," *Latah Legacy*, Vol. 14, No. 4, Winter, 1985, 5, 15; John B. Miller, *The Trees Grow Tall* (Moscow: News Review Publishing Company, 1972), 37-39, 44-47; Thomas A. Farbo, *Potlatch Logging Camps, Bovill-Headquarters Sides Idaho 1903-1986* [Idaho Humanities Council, 1991], University of Idaho Special Collections, n.p

3. Latah County Assessor's Office, Moscow, Idaho, Grantor and Grantee Mortgage Books; *Bovill Record,* August 9, 1911, December 2, 1911, December 2, 1911, February 3, 1912, February 24, 1912, March 2, 1912, April 13, 1912.

4. *Bovill Record,* September 5, 1913.

5. Sam A. Miller, "Lumber Town of the Past," bound typescript, n.d., University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho, n.p.; Opera House, Bovill, Photographs PG 12-128, University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho; Miller, *The Trees Grow Tall,* pp. 99, 102, 127, 132.

6. Sanborn Map Company, Bovill, Latah County, Idaho, July 1916.

7. Lloyd Hall interview, transcript pp. 12-14, 16.

8. Miller, *The Trees Grow Tall*, p. 132.

9. Lloyd Hall interview, transcript pp. 1-6, 15-17.

10. Lloyd Hall interview, transcript pp. 18-20.

11. Lloyd Hall interview, transcript pp. 6-11, 18.

12. Lloyd Hall interview, transcript pp. 21-22; information provided by Bovill resident, Guy Loomis; May 19, 2009; information provided by Angie Vanhoozer, a Bovill city intern during the summer of 2008, May 19, 2009.

Bibliography

Bovill Record.

Farbo, Thomas A. *Potlatch Logging Camps, Bovill-Headquarters Sides Idaho 1903-1986.* [Idaho Humanities Council, 1991]. University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho.

Hall, Lloyd. Interviewed by Linda Morton-Keithley, August 27, 1997. OH 1325, Idaho Oral History Center, Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, Idaho.

Latah County Assessor's Office. Grantor and Grantee Mortgage Books.

Loomis, Guy. Information provided to preparer. May 19, 2009.

Miller, John B. *The Trees Grow Tall.* Moscow, Idaho: News Review Publishing Company, 1972.

Miller, Sam A. "Lumber Town of the Past: Bound typescript. n.d. University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho.

Opera House, Bovill. Photograph. PG 12-128 Photographs. University of Idaho Special Collections, Moscow, Idaho.

Reed, Mary. "The Outdoor Life in Latah County." *Latah Legacy* Vol. 14, No. 4, Winter, 1985.

Sanborn Map Company. Bovill, Latah County, Idaho, July 1916.

Vanhoozer, Angie. Information provided to preparer. May 19, 2009.

Photographs
Bovill Opera House
Bovill, Latah County, Idaho

All photographs by Suzanne Julin, May 19, 2009.
Negatives in possession of Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.

1. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   View looking east

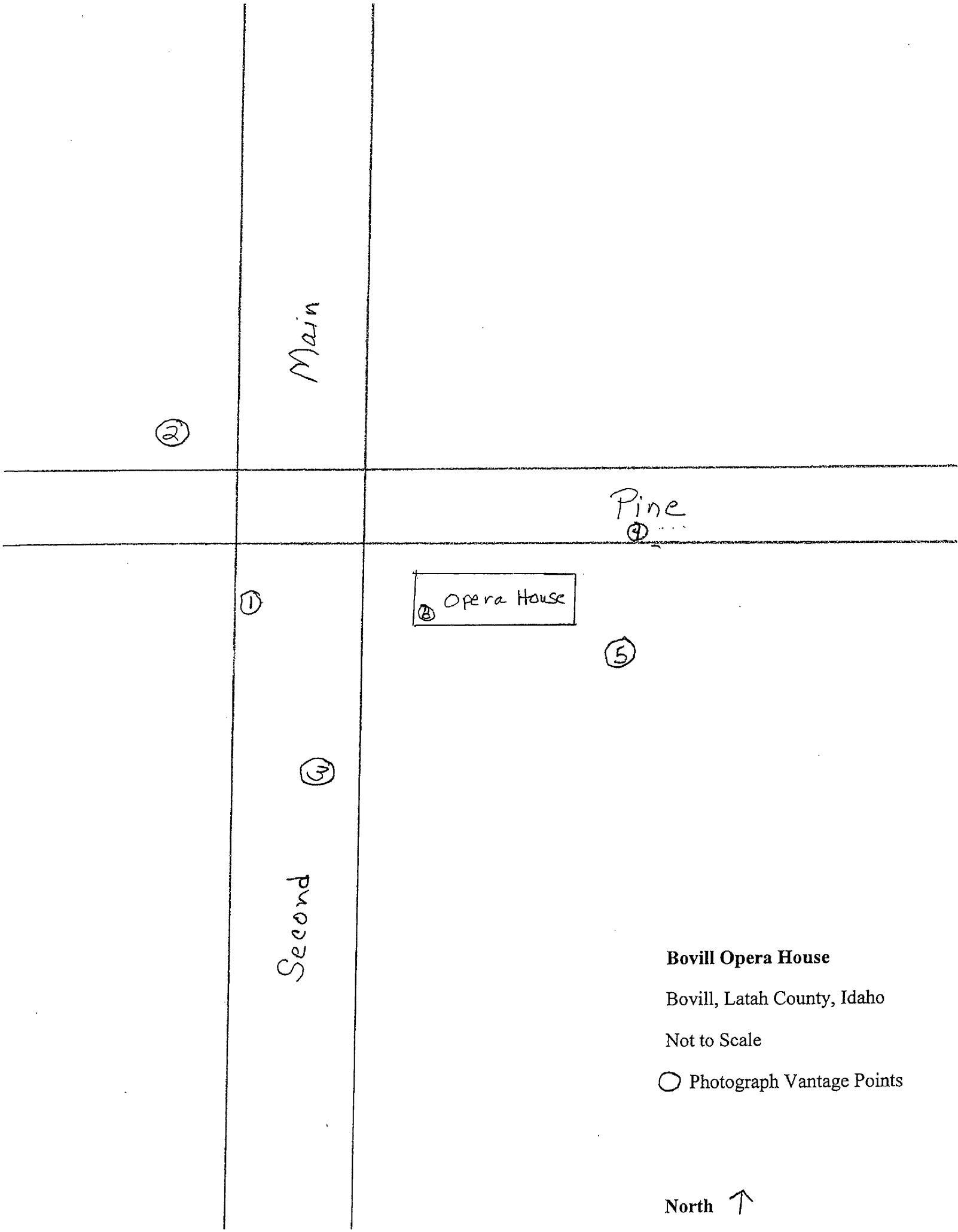
2. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   View looking southeast

3. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   View looking northeast

4. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   View looking southwest

5. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   View looking west-northwest

6. Bovill Opera House
   Bovill, Latah County, Idaho
   Interior - looking northeast



Bovill Opera House

Bovill, Latah County, Idaho

Not to Scale

○ Photograph Vantage Points

North ↑

BOVILL Historical MUSEUM

Bovill Opera House
Bovill, Latah Co., ID
View to East
Photo 1 of 6

Bovill Opera House
Bovill, Latah Co., ID
Views to Southeast
Photo #2 of 6

BOYLE Historical MUSEUM
STOP

Bovill Opera House
Bovill, Latah Co, ID
View to Northeast
Photo #3 of 6

Bouvill Opera House
Bouvill, Kalah Co, ND
View to Southwest
Photo #4 of 6

Bovill Opera House

Bovill, Latah Co., ID

View to West

Photo #5 of 6

THURSDA
Other Door

Bovill Opera House - ticket booth
Bovill, Latah Co., ID
View to Northeast
Photo #6 of 6