

# Teton County Historic Site Survey

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Josiah Ferrin House

other name/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 145 E. Pearl ☐ not for publication

city or town Jackson ☐ vicinity

state Wyoming code WY county Teton code 039 zip code 83001

## 3. Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

## 4. Category of Property

(check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

## 5. Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     | <u>1</u>        | buildings  |
| _____        | _____           | sites      |
| _____        | _____           | structures |
| _____        | _____           | objects    |
| <u>1</u>     | <u>1</u>        | Total      |

## Property Owner

name/title Willow Street Partners LLC

street & number P. O. Box 4099 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Jackson state WY zip code 83001

## Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

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

\_\_\_\_\_

## National Register Status:

- ☒ Eligible ☐ Unevaluated  
☐ Not Eligible ☐ District Potential

**6. Function or Use****Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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**Current Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / Trade: specialty business

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**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

National Folk

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**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**foundation** concrete

**walls** wood

**roof** asphalt shingle

**other**

**Narrative Description**

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

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

**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.)

**Areas of Significance**

Social History

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

c. 1913-1955

**Significant Dates****Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation****Architect/Builder**

Charles Fox

☒ 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
- ☐ 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:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other Name of repository:

Jackson Hole Historical Society

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

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property less than 2 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/2 5/1/9/4/5/0 4/8/1/4/0/1/1  
Zone Easting Northing2 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing3 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing4 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10**11. Form Prepared By**

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps**
- **Photographs:** Representative photographs of the property.



# Teton County Historic Site Survey

## Continuation Sheet

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Josiah Ferrin House

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### Narrative Description

The Josiah (Si) Ferrin House is located on Pearl Avenue at the bottom of Bean Hill about a block east and a block south of the town square in Jackson, Wyoming. It was constructed around 1913, but the exact date is not known at this time.

The house is a rectangular gabled-roof one and one-half story building that faces Pearl Avenue on the south. Built very much in the style of a gable-fronted National Folk house, it still retains its identifying features, even though some additions have changed the house in subtle ways over the years.

The south elevation is the front of the house and features a dominant gable and a subordinate gable that shares the west slope of the roof. The subordinate gable caps a projection on the west side of the elevation that then creates a porch to the east with a wooden railing. Although the porch wraps around to the east elevation, the front of the porch is covered by a hipped roof canopy that joins with the gable roof over the projection. The entrance to the house is in the center, just east of the front projection. A double-hung window is centered beneath the main gable. The east elevation includes the porch that continues from the south and which provides a walk to an entrance near the front of the building. Near the center of the elevation a bay extends outward a couple of feet. This projection, on its front, continues upward through the eave and becomes a shed dormer on the east slope of the roof while on the ground level this becomes the plane of the elevation as it reaches to the north. The original house has been extended even farther north with a gabled addition that also has a gabled dormer on top of it. Twin entrances are located in the center of the ground floor and additional entrances, stepped back (to the south) are on either side. The west elevation is relatively less complicated than the others, although around midpoint a gabled dormer projects beyond the plane of the elevation and caps a bay here too.

The description above may make the building sound hopelessly cobbled together, but that is far from the case. The defining elements of the superior craftsmanship that went into the building at its origin still shine and provide not only unity in appearance but even harmony. The gables, for example, wind up being pedimented by their positioning over another sloping roof. Wooden shingles are used within the gable. The tall, narrow windows are enclosed with customized wood surrounds. In fact, as it appears now, the building has a quiet elegance lacking in many structures, an elegance, moreover, that is consistent with its original design and appearance.

A separate barn located behind the building is considered noncontributing. The barn was transformed into a garage and then into office spaces, and in the process has lost the necessary integrity of appearance for eligibility for the National Register.

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Josiah Ferrin House



Josiah Ferrin House, Jackson, Wyoming. Looking northeast. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

# Teton County Historic Site Survey Continuation Sheet

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Josiah Ferrin House

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Josiah Ferrin House, Jackson, Wyoming. Looking northwest. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

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# Teton County Historic Site Survey Continuation Sheet

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Josiah Ferrin House



Josiah Ferrin House, Jackson, Wyoming. East elevation, looking southwest. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

# Teton County Historic Site Survey Continuation Sheet

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Josiah Ferrin House



Josiah Ferrin House, Jackson, Wyoming. Looking south. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.



# Teton County Historic Site Survey

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Josiah Ferrin House

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

The Josiah Ferrin House in Jackson is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of significance Social History and under Criterion C in the area of significance, Architecture.

The earliest mention of this house comes at a point early in its life but not at its construction. Charles Fox, who would become the premier builder of Jackson Hole, had built this home after his arrival in the valley in 1910 and before the arrival of Gretchen Huff in 1916—who was born in the house. Her father, Dr. Charles Huff arrived in Jackson in 1913, lived in Ma Reed's inn for a while and then in a log cabin, but moved himself and his wife into Fox's house where his daughter Gretchen was born in September, 1916. The family lived in that house about two years, moving into another cabin and then into their own home in 1918. Fox purchased the property from Maggie Simpson in 1911 but took out a mortgage, presumably for construction, in 1913. The house was built by Fox, and perhaps he lived there too, but he rented it to the Huffs probably in 1915. The Huffs were abruptly moved out of the house, though, when Fox sold it to Si Ferrin in 1917; and he sold to Ferrin without informing the Huffs, thus producing an awkward situation when the large Ferrin family arrived with their possessions, ready to move in. But move out the Huffs did, and move in the Ferrins also did.

Josiah D. Ferrin—Si Ferrin—was an individual at the heart of the settlement and development of Jackson Hole from 1898 to 1930, reflecting in his own experiences, including moving his family into this house—the essential contours of life in the valley. After his first visit to the area as a drover in 1898 for John Wilson who both collected cattle as tithes from local Mormon settlers and also bought cattle for himself, Ferrin went back to Utah but persuaded others to join him in a migration two years later; most of those who ventured northward with him stayed in Idaho, but Ferrin returned to Jackson Hole. Renting land for several years and filing on land that proved untillable by Flat Creek, Ferrin ultimately was able to homestead on Buffalo Bench in the north end of the valley and he began to develop a substantial cattle ranch in 1908. Before filing his homestead, Ferrin also started working for the state as a game warden and while he subsequently both ranched and worked as a warden, he became increasingly diverse in his activities. His ranch grew dramatically through buying out other ranches and his children also filing homesteads, and by the 1920s his Elk Ranch had become one of the largest in the valley, and perhaps even *the* largest. As historian John Daugherty notes, "If Jackson Hole ever had a cattle baron, Si Ferrin perhaps fit the role as well as any other rancher in the valley." His business ventures expanded, and he acquired a contract to supply beef to the workers on the new dam at Moran. He also won the contract in 1914 to carry the mail between Jackson and Moran for three years, and it was in those years that he moved into the house on Pearl Avenue. In 1928 Ferrin sold his properties at the Elk Ranch to the Snake River Land Company and started ranching in Idaho; he went bankrupt during the Depression. Possibly because of the financial difficulties he faced in the 1930s, he deeded this house to his wife Edith in 1935. Edith sold the house to Walt Spicer in 1942, but at that time the Ferrins still lived in Jackson. Ferrin was quoted in a newspaper in 1942 that "I'd rather live in Jackson Hole than in any other place on earth. . . . I've

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Josiah Ferrin House

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been looking at them for 46 years but I've never known a moment when the Tetons didn't stir my soul."

Ferrin died in 1944 and the house went through a series of owners including Robert E. Hansen, Herbert Ulrich, and then James G. Scarlett in the 1950s.

The building is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of significance Architecture. The house, predating the Huff House and possibly also the Miller House in town, was constructed by Charles Fox, recognized as the pre-eminent builder in the valley and this would have been one of the first buildings he constructed. His subsequent projects included a number of barns, the Chapel of Transfiguration near Moose, some of the buildings at the JY Ranch and the Bar BC, the 4 Lazy F, Jackson Hole Hardware, the buildings at Cissy Patterson's Flat Creek Ranch, and the old gymnasium once located at Miller Park. He also constructed the two-story lodge for W. Lewis Johnson near the John Sargent ranch that ultimately became part of the AMK complex in the northern part of Jackson Hole.

The building itself is a striking example of a National Folk house, this one falling into the gable-front-and-wing family of buildings. With its Greek revival influence of pedimented façades this style was popular in New England and the urban northeast but expanded westward, gaining popularity in towns with narrow lots, as these lots were. This is related directly to the similar style of gable-front houses without wings and related, possibly, to the southern shotgun style house, but the latter is a one-story building and without the intricate styling that went into the National Folk gabled house.

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Josiah Ferrin House

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### Bibliography

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Daugherty, John. *A Place Called Jackson Hole* (Moose, Wyoming: Grand Teton National Park, 1999).

"Edith Ferrin Honored," newspaper clipping, unidentified source, dated February 4, 1971, in Jackson Hole Historical Society collections.

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"Grandma Ferrin Dies May 12," *Jackson Hole Guide*, May 16, 1974.

Hayden, Elizabeth Wied. *From Trapper to Tourist in Jackson Hole* (n.p.: Grand Teton Natural History Association, 1957).

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"Josiah Ferrin," *Jackson Hole Guide*, December 2, 1965.

Land Records, Office of the County Clerk, Teton County, Wyoming.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf: 2000).

Nelson, Fern. *This Was Jackson's Hole: Incidents & Profiles from the Settlement of Jackson Hole* (Glendo, Wyoming: High Plains Press, 1994).

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# Teton County Historic Site Survey

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Josiah Ferrin House

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### **Geographical Data**

#### Verbal Boundary Description

This property consists of lot 3, Pearl and Willow Addition, Amended, Town of Jackson. [Before the abandonment of its previous platting, this was lot 11 and part of lot 12, block 2, Cache Creek Addition.]

#### Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the property historically associated with the Si Ferrin House.