

# Teton County Historic Site Survey

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Robert and Grace Miller House

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

## 2. Location

street & number 211 E. Broadway ☐ not for publication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>                    </u>
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
<u>1</u>	<u>                    </u>
	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
	Total

## Property Owner

name/title Broadway Centre Partnership

street & number P. O. Box 489 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: business

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

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

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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**

Exploration / Settlement

Architecture

Social History

**Period of Significance**

c. 1914 - 1955

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

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Robert and Grace Miller

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

☒ 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 one acres**UTM References**

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

1 1/2 5/1/9/5/2/8 4/8/1/4/1/3/7  
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.



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## Continuation Sheet

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Robert and Grace Miller House

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### Narrative Description

The Miller House, not to be confused with what is known as the Miller Cabin or Miller Ranch located on the National Elk Refuge, is in the town of Jackson and, in contrast to the Miller Cabin which has a rustic appearance appropriate to its history and location, is a house with modern aspirations and associations in every way. The house faces west onto what is now Willow Street between Broadway and Deloney, but during the period of historic significance the street was not there and Cache Creek, a small stream, ran north where the street is now before turning west to join the waters of Flat Creek that drained the valley as it headed south.

The house is a splendid example of a Colonial Revival residence, constructed about 1914. A one and one-half story house with a basement, the nearly symmetrical building has clapboard siding and features gables on the sides (the north and south elevations) and also two prominent gables in the center of the west elevation. Each gable is given added distinction first by the extension of the roof beyond the plane of the elevation, and second by the enclosure of the eaves with soffits and fascia and a dramatic cornice return in each, making each gable that much more prominent. In the west elevation, two gables define the center. This elevation includes a forward (western) projecting entry with a gabled portico; the north and south elevations of the entryway contain pairs of tall narrow windows and the entrance itself is a glass door positioned between sidelights. A porch extends outward from the entrance and has two steps down with wrought iron rails. Wrought iron columns support the portico and a matching rail provides a border for the porch. On the west elevation, on either side of the entrance, almost matching windows (two on the north and three on the south) are covered with awnings. Above the entry a gabled dormer projects boldly directly above the entry, the front elevation of the dormer on the same plane as the west elevation of the building. It bears repeating that the elaborate, and massive, cornices of the two gables, with their accenting cornice returns at the lower corners, dominate the main view of the building.

The north elevation represents the major deviation from the building's symmetry with a single-story room projecting out from the main elevation. That room, which may have been added after the original building was constructed, is illuminated by a series of four- and nine-light windows on all three of its elevations. The roof is flat and the cornice matches the cornice of the basic building. An entrance near the east limit of the north elevation has gained a ramp for disability access in recent years. Within the gable above this projecting room, is a pair of French doors centered, flanked by four-light windows positioned high under the eaves. A louvered vent is located directly beneath the gable peak.

The east elevation is unbroken except for the fenestration, an asymmetrical positioning of four windows of different configuration. This elevation is obscured by foliage on the adjacent property line. The south elevation, parallel to Broadway, includes a large brick chimney that rises through the roof on the west side of the roof peak. On the lower story an eight-light (four above, four below) window is to the west of the chimney and is matched by another to the east. To the east of that window is a pair



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of double-hung windows. On the second level, a pair of double-hung windows is centered under the peak of the gable and they are flanked by four-light windows that match those in the north gable.

The Miller House is attractively landscaped with different heights of plants surrounding the building and the grounds carefully maintained to show both the landscaping and the house to greatest advantage. Even with the possible modifications to the original house, which have been subtle and unobtrusive, the Miller House retains excellent integrity.



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

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Miller House, Jackson, Wyoming. Looking southeast. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2005.

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

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Robert and Grace Miller House

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Miller House in Jackson, Wyoming, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because it meets Criterion A, for its historic significance, and Criterion C as an example of a specific architectural style. It may also meet the requirements of Criterion B for its association with Robert and Grace Miller, both individuals important in the community.

Robert Miller came to Jackson Hole in 1884 or 1885, a time when the valley was just beginning to be settled by white people, and established his homestead on Flat Creek in the southern end of the valley on land that is now part of the National Elk Refuge. By 1893 he was sufficiently established that he was able to return to his Illinois home, marry, and bring his wife, Grace Green Miller, to the valley where the two began a prosperous career. As Miller's ranch thrived, he began loaning hay to neighboring ranchers, collecting interest from them for the loan, and then he began lending them money. Both he and his wife received patents on land they homesteaded and their ranch became something of a community center, serving as the post office and polling place for elections. Moreover both Millers began to develop land and Grace Miller herself platted part of an eighty acre parcel for the development of a new town south of their ranch and began selling off lots in that parcel. By the turn of the century the town of Jackson was starting to emerge on the plat and the Millers were prominent as ranchers, as developers, as money-lenders, and soon (1902) Robert Miller was named Supervisor for the newly created Teton Division of the Yellowstone Forest Reserve and the supervisor's office was located on the Miller Ranch. He became Supervisor of the Teton National Forest upon its creation in 1908.

The Millers moved into Jackson in 1914 when they sold their land to the U.S. Government for use as a National Elk Refuge. Already prominently and concretely identified with the fate of the town of Jackson, the Millers continued their activities—Robert Miller leaving his position with the Forest Service in 1918—as town leaders. In 1914 Robert Miller and some neighbors organized the Jackson State Bank and named Miller its president.

The exact location of their initial residence in town is not known, but within a short period of time they had built and moved into the house currently surveyed, a house which fronted on Cache Creek flowing gently past the front of their house. This house could have been built as early as 1914 and served as their home when they moved to town or it could have been as late as 1921, but it was probably earlier in this period than later. If this house should be nominated to the National Register, this date will need to be further researched and verified.

Grace Miller herself was elected mayor of the community in 1920. In the following years both Millers remained active in the community as civic and economic leaders. Robert Miller served as the land buyer for the Snake River Land Company from 1927 to 1929 when he was removed from that position; the Snake River Land Company was purchasing properties for the ultimate purpose of expanding the small Grand Teton National Park. Miller then became a bitter and determined



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opponent of such expansion, believing the loss of ranching land to the federal government would ruin the local economy. He also, however, managed to prosper in his brief tenure as purchasing agent for the land company. Miller died of a heart attack in the garden near his house in 1934. Grace Miller suffered a heart attack the next year and moved from their home in Jackson back to Illinois, where her husband and infant son had been buried and where she died in 1947.

The historic significance of the house (Criterion A) should be clear since it reflects the emergence of the town of Jackson itself, following the lives and careers of the Millers who moved literally and symbolically from homesteading and ranching to town. This house represents, thus, the early urban development of the community in a way that few other properties can. But it also represents more, and this is where Criterion C (architectural significance) comes into play. The house was a clear departure from the vernacular style dominating most construction in the valley and was not intended to be a log, frontier-style home. It was a modern house, part of the revival of colonial architecture prominent in the nation and in the East and Midwest where clearly the Millers still held strong attachments. It marked the future of the town in their grand vision, a future in which Jackson would be like other modern, twentieth-century communities. It is, in fact, a beautiful building, and its stylistic elements are grand and worthy of detailed discussion in a nomination document. The particular features that help identify this as a Colonial Revival house include the windows with double-hung sashes and multi-paned glazing; the windows generally positioned in pairs; the accentuated front door with a decorative crown, extended forward with an entry porch and with sidelights; the generally symmetrical appearance with the center door. In this case, the building represents the Centered Gable form of Colonial Revival buildings with its prominent, dual, gables over the doorway and the dormer above.

There is no doubt about the prominence and local significance of both Robert and Grace Miller and this building would probably qualify therefore also under Criterion B—the association with significant individuals. Because of their roles in public and private leadership in the community and their roles in generating the town and the social order that emerged in Jackson, those two individuals rank in the first order of “significant” people in the early history of Jackson and Teton County. The requirements for listing under Criterion B, however, generally require that the building bearing the association with the significant people must also be demonstrated to have an association with the actions that made them significant. Which is to say that it is not enough that significant people lived in a house; the house must also be important to their lives and careers. This building may, in fact, meet that test if enough additional research is done that can show such connections. Even so, nominations under Criterion B have a difficult test to pass, and that test may be unnecessary since the building so clearly qualifies under Criteria A and C.



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### Bibliography

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

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).

Righter, Robert, *Crucible for Conservation: The Struggle for Grand Teton National Park* (n.p.: Colorado Associated University Press, 1982).

Warranty Deed, Robert E. Miller and Grace G. Miller to the United States of America, June 10, 1914, filed January 4, 1915.

Warranty Deed, Robert E. Miller and Grace G. Miller to the United States of America, March 18, 1914, filed January 4, 1915. National Elk Refuge files.



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### **Geographical Data**

#### Verbal Boundary Description

This property includes lots part of SW 1/4 SW 1/4, Section 27, TWP. 41, RNG. 116.

#### Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the property historically associated with the Miller House in Jackson, Wyoming.