



Menor's Ferry Historic District

RESOURCE BRIEF

Importance

The Menor's Ferry Historic District is a largely intact homestead from the early settlement of Jackson Hole. The district, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, represents a nationally significant period in American history. In 1892, William (Bill) Menor became the first homesteader on the west side of the Snake River for many miles. His ferry provided a reliable river crossing, and his general store provided supplies and a post office for area homesteaders. Menor sold his property to Maud Noble in 1918 and business continued to thrive. The ferry ceased operations in 1927, when engineers constructed a nearby bridge. On July 26, 1923, Maud Noble hosted a landmark meeting in her cabin. Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Horace Albright and a small group of locals launched a plan that planted the seed for the establishment of Grand Teton National Park.



Restoration of the replica ferry.

Status and Trend

The Menor's Ferry Historic District draws park visitors to tour the historic buildings, ride a replica ferry across the Snake River, purchase replica products from the homestead era at the general store, study early forms of transportation and experience park history. During the summer season, rangers lead walking tours of the district and operate the ferry depending on river levels. A storekeeper dressed in

period clothing assists visitors, sells goods and provides area history. The store does not have electricity so a wood-burning stove provides heat on chilly mornings and rainy days.

The district includes Menor's home and general store, smokehouse, well, root cellar and Noble's cabin. The ferry is a replica and the transportation barn protects the park's collection of wagons and other means of transportation. In 2006, the ferry underwent preservation maintenance. In 2007, specialists from the NPS Western Center for Historic Preservation helped park interpreters create a new system to safely launch and beach the ferry. In 2008-09, preservation carpenters replaced the deck of the ferry and performed preservation maintenance, stabilization and reconstruction on most buildings in the district.



Maud Noble's cabin today.

Discussion

This vibrant district provides visitors a window into Jackson Hole's rich history. In addition to preservation work, the park is currently expanding the district's interpretive message. In 2007, interpreters recorded six place-based, Guide-by-Cell phone messages to augment self-guided walking tours. The park plans to install new interpretive signs outside the structures in 2010. To better tell the story of the struggle to preserve Grand Teton National Park, park managers hope to raise funds to develop new exhibits and furnish the Maud Noble cabin as it would have appeared during the famous 1923 meeting.

