UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Clark Hotel
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
112 Broadway
CITY, TOWN
Van Horn
STATE
Texas
CITY, TOWN
Van Horn
STATE
Texas
VICINITY OF

3 CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT
OWNER
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
PRIVATE
PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL
EDUCATIONAL
ENTERTAINMENT
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
INDUSTRIAL
MILITARY
MILITARY
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
RELIGIOUS
RELIGIOUS
SCIENTIFIC
SCIENTIFIC
TRANSPORTATION
TRANSPORTATION
OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Van Horn Historical Society
STREET & NUMBER
c/o M.J. Mitchell Box 721
CITY, TOWN
Van Horn
STATE
Texas
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC
Culberson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN
Van Horn
STATE
Texas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Historic Sites Inventory
DATE
1978
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Texas Historical Commission
CITY, TOWN
Austin
STATE
Texas
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Simple in plan and detailing, the Clark Hotel stands today as the oldest existing structure in Van Horn. While the hotel does not stand out as being architecturally significant, its malleability of function, which continues today, has made it a cornerstone in the historical foundations of Van Horn.

Built on the site of a previous commercial structure, erected in 1889 and razed in the late 1890's, the present hotel was constructed in stages between the years 1901 and 1929. A portion of the structure was built in 1901 as a commercial building for the newly organized township. In 1905 this structure was expanded into a larger, commercial structure which housed a wide variety of unrelated activities. In 1918 a new owner converted the building to a hotel. The construction of a major thoroughfare through Van Horn which passed directly behind the hotel prompted the owner to reverse the "front and back" facades. In 1929 the building was once again extended to house a cafe. The structure continued to function as a hotel until 1968.

The building is constructed of concrete blocks, made on the site at the time of construction. The structure is massed in a two-story, rectangular unit with a single-story addition projecting from what is now the front of the building. This facade is intermittently textured with a rough, stone-like appearance and pierced with a variety of window and door openings, which reflect the different dates of construction. All window and door units are composed of wooden components while the upper corners of the single-story openings are angled and the rectangular openings of the main unit are accentuated with lintels. The facade of the two-story mass is pierced with gutter spouts at the parapet level. The otherwise austere roofline is broken at regular intervals with stylized merlons, topped with urns, and a central representation of a broken scroll pediment.

The rear elevation (previous front facade) consists of a vertically emphasized facade constructed of concrete blocks which produce a subtle scored effect at the joints. The facade is broken into twelve bays, divided by pilasters. The bays on the street level are spanned with storefront windows and doors. On the second level, the bays are spanned with concrete blocks, pierced with lintel-accented door and window openings. The six central bays are recessed to form a balcony which is enclosed in a simple wooden balustrade. Records indicate that the balcony originally extended farther over the walkway, and was supported by slender columns. The larger balcony was removed about 1945. Records also indicate that the second story was originally accessible by two exterior staircases which no longer exist. Accessibility is now available through an interior staircase.

The interior of the structure is constructed of wood joists to which tongue and groove planks are attached. The high ceilings are textured in a beaded board pattern with a simple cornice molding. The former saloon and later lobby of the hotel contains a mahogany bar, imported from France in 1876. This bar and mirror set are carved with elaborate floral and classical details. The second story of the hotel contains a variety of room sizes, some with private baths and others that have access to a common bath. The structure is still equipped with usable electrical, plumbing and heating systems. A cellar of unknown size exists under a portion of the structure.
The hotel, currently owned by the Van Horn Historical Society, is in fair condition, with deterioration occurring primarily in the roof and second floor areas.
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in stages between 1901 and 1929, the Clark Hotel stands today as the oldest existing structure in Culberson County. The simple, unadorned building constructed of locally made concrete blocks, was the first substantial commercial building erected in Van Horn. Originally built to provide office space, the edifice has housed a wide variety of activities including retail, governmental, bar room, and boarding. Housing this kaleidoscope of activities that ranged from governmental agencies to entertainment and vices, the structure for many years functioned as the nucleus of Van Horn.

An earlier retail establishment occupied the site from 1889 into the 1890's. When the township became organized, this structure was razed to make way for a new one. In 1901 the Cox brothers of Van Horn built a small office building. Anderson Lowden purchased the property in 1903 where he established Lowden Mercantile Company, and in 1904 added a lumber company. The Cox brothers again acquired the property in 1905 and began constructing the main portion of the current structure, utilizing local materials. Completed in 1906, the building housed professional and commercial offices, an opera house, community center, dance hall and Woodmen of the World Lodge on the second floor and a pool hall, saloon, newspaper printing office, drug store, and jewelry store downstairs. The saloon was furnished with an ornately-carved mahogany bar imported from France in 1876. At this time the structure was oriented to the north on Front Street, Van Horn's main business street. Hitching posts lined the street for horses and rigs.

When Culberson County was organized in April, 1911, and Van Horn voted county seat, the commissioners court and other county officers occupied part of the structure as a court house, as it was the only structure large enough for that purpose. The county officers occupied the newspaper office until 1914, when a courthouse was constructed. The first district court was held in the second floor opera house. On occasion, the noise from the saloon below would rise to such a level that it would disrupt the court sessions. In addition, the structure served as a center for local entertainment and social gatherings. Travelling theatrical groups and "chatauquas" performed in the opera house. Van Horn's post office, which presently occupies a portion of the structure, was first housed in a tiny room in a corner of the drug store.

In 1918, Fred Clark, Sr. purchased the structure and converted it to a hotel. In 1925, U.S. Highway 80 was constructed through Van Horn, parallel to and south of Front Street. In 1929 an addition was constructed to house a cafe. Many structures located on the south side of Front Street were altered to face the major thoroughfare, including the hotel. The hotel functioned as such until the late 1960's. Each year an old timers reunion is sponsored in the
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
County Records, Culberson County
Marker File, Texas Historical Commission
Handbook of Texas
Monograph submitted by Culberson County Historical Commission on file at THC

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

UTM REFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>1,6,1,1,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
Block 5, Lots 6, 7, 8, 9 in Van Horn.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
Linda C. Flory

ORGANIZATION
Texas Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER
Box 12276

CITY OR TOWN
Austin

STATE
Texas

78711

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___  STATE ___  LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
lobby by the Culberson County Historical Commission. The Van Horn Historical Society plans to continue the established diversity of usage as well as community service by converting the space to a museum.
Property: Clark Hotel

State: [State Name] Working Number: 5.16.79. 1157

TECHNICAL
Photos: 3
Maps: 1

Outstanding local significance. A commercial, social, and judicial center of town and county during early 20th century development.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER
Inventory
Review

Architecture was not checked as significant, but the building has local vernacular character. It is an example of a building that has been adapted and enlarged through time, and thus reflects the growth, development and changing needs of the community. The building still retains its integrity of location, materials, workmanship, feeling and local historical association.

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF
Accept

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up
Federal Register Entry: 8-7-79
Send-back
Re-submit

Entered: Jul 19, 1979

United States Department of the Interior - Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Clark Hotel

Van Horn, Culberson County, Texas

Photo: Texas Historical Commission, 1978

South Elevation

Photo #1 of 3

MAY 16 1979
Clark Hotel

Van Horn, Culberson County, Texas

Photo: Texas Historical Commission, 1978

North Elevation

Photo # 2 of 3

MAY 16, 1979
Clark Hotel
Van Horn, Culberson County, Texas
Photo: Texas Historical Commission, 1978
Interior: Bar
Photo # 3 of 3
MAY 16, 1979
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newton County Courthouse</td>
<td>Newton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clark Hotel</td>
<td>Van Horn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Also Notified**

- Honorable Lloyd M. Bentsen
- Honorable John C. Tower
- Honorable Charles Wilson
- Honorable Richard C. White

| NR       | Byers/bjr   | 7/25/79 |

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.