

HISTORY COLORADO

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NOMINATION FORM

SECTION I

Name of Property

Historic Name: Red Feather Lakes Post Office

Other Names: Village Emporium

Address of Property

[] address not for publication

Street Address: 25 Main Street

City: Red Feather Lakes

County: Larimer

Zip: 80545

Present Owner of Property

(for multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name: David Ferlic

Address: 3076 Fenton Street

Phone: (720) 270-4266

City: Wheat Ridge

State: Colorado

Zip: 80214-8118

Owner Consent for Nomination

(attach signed consent from each owner of property - see attached form)

Preparer of Nomination

Name: Leslie Moore and Andrew Olson (for property owner) Date: June 20, 2019

Organization: Graduate students in the Department of History at Colorado State University

Address: Campus Delivery 1776 Colorado State University

Phone: (970) 491-6335

City: Fort Collins

State: Colorado

Zip: 80523

FOR OFFICIAL USE:

Site Number 5LR.14425

5/15/2019 Nomination Received

9/20/2019 Review Board Recommendation

Approval Denial

9/25/2019

HC Board State Register Listing

Approved Denied

Listing Criteria A B C D E

Abby K. Norton
Certification of Listing: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer HISTORY COLORADO

9/30/19
Date

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SECTION II

Local Historic Designation

Has the property received local historic designation?

no

yes --- individually designated designated as part of a historic district

Date designated _____

Designated by _____ (Name of municipality or county)

Use of Property

Historic: COMMERCIAL/Office, GOVERNMENT/Post Office

Current: COMMERCIAL

Original Owner: Unknown

Source of Information: N/A

Year of Construction: 1922

Source of Information: "Old and new post offices at R—", date unknown, Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, Red Feather Lakes, CO.

Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist or Designer: Unknown

Source of Information: N/A

Locational Status

Original location of resource(s)

Resource(s) moved to current location

Date of move _____

For Office Use Only

Property Type: building(s) district site structure object area

Architectural Style/Engineering Type: No Style

Period of Significance: 1952-69

Level of Significance: Local State National

Multiple Property Submission: n/a

Acreage less than one

P.M. 6th Township 10N Range 73W Section 28 Quarter Sections SW NW; NW SW

UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 450216 Northing 4516868 NAD83

Site Elevation: 8355 feet

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SECTION III

DESCRIPTION AND ALTERATIONS

Setting and Location

The Red Feather Lakes Post Office stands facing north on a 0.5-acre parcel at an elevation of approximately 8,330' on the south side of Main Street in the southwest portion of Red Feather Lakes' commercial center. Red Feather Lakes is a rural, mountain community in Larimer County. The area surrounding the town is wooded with pine and fir trees and scattered with numerous small lakes. Red Feather Lakes is an unincorporated village with a year-round population of 329 residents.¹ Most of the streets, including Main Street, are unpaved. Main Street is relatively short, stretching approximately 440' between Prairie Divide Road to the west and Fire House Lane to the east. There is little vegetation along Main Street and diagonal parking is available on both sides of the street. The Red Feather Lakes Post Office is set back from Main Street by approximately 8'.

The Post Office's front entry is accessed from the street via four uncut irregular-coursed stone, brick, and cement steps, which match the foundation of the building. To the east of the steps is an attached planter box made from the same materials. A telephone pole stands flush against the east end of the front of the building. A non-historic shed sits at the southeastern edge of the property. There is grass and a non-historic concrete-block retaining wall along the east edge of the parcel. On the northwest corner of the property are two community notice boards and a salt barrel. The area between the Post Office and the neighboring parcel to the west is bare dirt. The southern portion of the parcel is bordered by a gravel alley, beyond which Lake Ramona is visible. The grade of the property slopes noticeably from east to west.

Description of Primary Resource

The primary resource is a 408-square-foot, rectangular, one-story, wood-frame building. The front (north side) faces Main Street (Photo 3). The building is painted brown with green trim and has an uncut irregular-coursed stone foundation that is visible on the west and south sides only. Apart from the central portion of the facade and the south side, the building is clad with wood simulated-log siding. The Post Office has a front-gable roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. Wood fascia boards cover the rafter ends. The roof is clad in brown asphalt shingles, which have been covered with green metal roofing panels.

The front is clad with a mixture of 6"-wide wood clapboard siding, and 4"-wide wood simulated-log siding. The main entrance, a wood Dutch door with a plain wood surround, is slightly offset from center. The door's top half has nine lights, and the bottom half features a cross buck design. To the west of the door is a tall, rectangular, single-light, fixed-sash, glass window with a plain wood surround. A non-historic outdoor floodlight is mounted to the wall between, and just above, the door and window. A shallow, shed-roof overhang, covered in asphalt shingles and supported by three wood brackets, is above the door and window. Above the overhang are two hand-painted wood signs

¹ "Red Feather Lakes, CO." Data USA. Accessed May 10, 2019. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/red-feather-lakes-co/>.

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that together read "The VILLAGE EMPORIUM." To the east of the signs is a recessed circular vent covered by metal mesh.

The east side of the building features two windows (Photo 4). A small, square, single-light, fixed-sash wood window is on the north end of the east wall. A taller, rectangular, single-light, fixed-sash, wood window is on the south end of the wall. Both windows have a plain wood surround. An electrical box and meter are attached to the wall near the southeast corner of the building.

The rear (south) side is clad in wood clapboard siding, except at the gable peak, which is clad in wood simulated-log siding (Photo 5 & 6). The rear wall has a door and two windows. The non-historic door is located on the west end of the wall and is fiberglass with a simple wood surround. The upper half of the door contains a one-over-one single-hung sash window, with a screen covering the lower half; the bottom half of the door has two rectangular raised panels imprinted into the fiberglass. To the east of the rear entry is a small, rectangular, single-light, fixed-sash wood window with a wood surround. On the east end of the wall is a larger, rectangular, single-hung, non-historic vinyl window with a screen and simple wood surround. This non-historic window has vinyl faux muntins to give the impression of a six-over-six window. An unpainted, wood deck with simple round wood support posts and wood-pole railings is attached to the south end of the building. A non-historic wood pergola painted green stands on the deck and is attached to the south wall of the building above the door and windows. Beneath the deck, on the west side, are remnants of a stone foundation that match the foundation of the building.

Like the east side, the west side is clad in wood simulated-log siding and features two windows (Photo 7). The window on the south end is a six-over-six double-hung wood window with a simple wood surround. The window on the north end is a single-light, fixed-sash, wood window with a simple wood surround that is slightly taller than the southern window.

Shed, non-contributing, ca. 2000s

A non-contributing, one-story shed with a low-pitched, side-gable roof is located near the southeast corner of the property (Photo 8). The shed's construction date is ca. 2000s. The shed is painted brown with green trim to match the Red Feather Lakes Post Office. It has no foundation, but the southwest corner is supported with a cement block to keep it balanced on the uneven grade. The shed is clad in T1-11 plywood siding. The doorway and a window are on the west side of the shed. The shed doors are offset to the north, with a one-by-one, vinyl, sliding window to the south of the doors. The roof has asphalt shingles with overhanging eaves on the east and west sides, but not on the north and south sides. The south side of the shed has a painted wood sign that reads "VILLAGE EMPORIUM." The shed can be accessed via the wood deck extending off of the Red Feather Lakes Post Office's south side.

Alterations

No historic photos of the building prior to its period of significance as a post office have been located to date; however, a limited number of historic photos of the Red Feather Lakes Post Office document changes to the building and its setting after 1952. In 1953, the year after it became a post office, the building was painted red with white trim and had a metal chimney pipe on the western side of the roof (Fig. 1). The 1953 photo also shows that the windows on the north façade and west side

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were originally double-hung, four-over-four windows, and the door was a single light wood panel door. By 1966, the metal chimney pipe was removed and the double-hung, four-over-four window on the front (north) facade was replaced by the existing single-light, fixed-sash wood window (Fig. 3). The single-light, fixed-sash wood windows on the east side of the building may have been installed around this time as well. The single-light window on the north side of the west wall appears to have been installed sometime after 1969 based on historic photos (Fig. 4).

On the west side of the building, a ca. 1960 photo (Fig. 2) and a 1966 photo (Fig. 3) document what appears to be a wood-frame, shed-roof outbuilding, or perhaps addition, built sometime after 1952. This feature was removed by 1969, when the town built the modern post office just west of the Red Feather Lakes Post Office (Fig. 4).

The construction dates of the existing porch and pergola are unknown, but presumed to be outside the period of significance based on design, materials and historic photos. Beneath the existing porch, on the west side, are remnants of a stone foundation that match the foundation of the building, suggesting that a porch or steps extended from the rear door at some point in time; however, no documentation of this feature has been found to date.

The historic front door was replaced by the existing Dutch door ca. 1980s and the rear door was likely replaced around this time as well. The exact date of the installation of the vinyl replacement window on the rear wall is unknown, but presumed to be relatively recent based on the window's design and materials. The existing green metal roofing was added in the 2000s (Fig. 1 & 3); prior to that time the roof was covered with asphalt shingles.

Integrity

The Red Feather Lakes Post Office retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance from 1952-69 when it served as the town's post office. The building is on its original site and therefore retains integrity of location. The overall design remains largely intact, although the addition of a rear deck and pergola, presumably constructed after the period of significance, has slightly altered the original design. The footprint, massing, and pattern of openings remain predominantly the same. Impacts to the building's integrity of materials have resulted from its nearly one hundred years of use; efforts to maintain the building have included the replacement of the entrance doors, at least one window, and, more recently, the addition of metal roofing. The clapboard siding from the Post Office's period of significance remains intact as do several historic windows. The workmanship of the original builders is demonstrated in the overhanging eaves and uncut, irregular-coursed stone foundation and front steps. The clapboard walls convey the feeling of a rustic building constructed to match the rural, mountain village theme of Red Feather Lakes.

There is strong integrity of setting. Main Street continues to reflect the community's rustic feel and commercial needs, even with the minimal renovations that have occurred on some nearby buildings and the construction in 1969 of a new post office to the west. The Red Feather Lakes community's historical memory, demonstrated by oral histories of two former post masters who worked in the post office, reveals a continued local commitment to associate the building with the people who used it. Main Street remains the primary village thoroughfare, and the unrestricted views of Lake Ramona continue to convey the post office's historic feeling.

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SECTION IV

Significance of Property

Nomination Criteria

- A** - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history
- B** - property is connected with persons significant in history
- C** - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan
- D** - property is of geographic importance
- E** - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

Areas of Significance

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/
Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/
Settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/
Community Identity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Politics/
Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community
Planning and
Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Social History |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |

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SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The Red Feather Lakes Post Office is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of Politics and Government, for serving as the local post office from 1952 to 1969. Throughout American history, post offices provided services that allowed communities to thrive.² This was especially true for rural mountain communities such as Red Feather Lakes, where postal services helped lessen the town's seclusion and contributed to its growth and stability. During the mid-twentieth century, the Red Feather Lakes Post Office served as an important civic and economic link to the outside world by providing the community with services such as mail delivery, shipping services, box rentals, and money orders. Local companies with national name recognition, such as *Homemaker* magazine and Red Feather Greens, Co., relied on the Red Feather Lakes Post Office to ship their products across the country. For over fifteen years, the Red Feather Lakes Post Office provided locals with important services that helped their town continue to be the close-knit, mountain getaway that its early developers envisioned.

Early Development of Red Feather Lakes

The earliest Euro-American settlers of the Red Feather Lakes region tended to be entrepreneurs looking to create an economy based on ranching and tourism. The Hardin family built a cabin along South Lone Pine Creek in 1871 and are considered by local historians to be the first Euro-Americans to settle in the valley.³ John Hardin raised cattle and hauled lumber to support his young family.⁴ Bill Creedmore, a trapper and hunter, lived in the valley next to the lake that is now known as Creedmore Lake.⁵ George H. West, a prominent businessman in Greeley, built a small hotel, known as Elkhorn House, south of the Hardin ranch in 1879 to accommodate travelers, miners, and summer vacationers.⁶ The hotel operated until 1890 when it burned down.

Throughout the 1880s, more ranchers and lumberers settled along Lone Pine Creek. Getting access to drinking water, draining hayfields, and digging lucrative fishing lakes became priorities for residents of the valley.⁷ In 1888, Jake Mitchell dug a series of irrigation ditches from the upper North Lone Pine Creek to present Lake Hiawatha, establishing the water claim from which the current lakes system evolved.⁸ Throughout the early 1900s, a number of people formed companies to purchase these ditches, reconstruct them, and build more reservoirs, lakes, and dams to enlarge overall capacity.⁹

The construction of hydraulic systems like ditches and dams needed capital provided by business as well as labor. An owner of one of these companies, Myron Akin, hired Japanese laborers to repair two dams one summer in the early 1900s.¹⁰ In 1907, Akin and his partner, Jesse Harris, merged their

² Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Harvard University Press, 1998), 1.

³ Evadene Burriss Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes: The First Hundred Years* (Red Feather Lakes, CO: Red Feather Historical Society, 1971), 1.

⁴ Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

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assets with the Laramie-Poudre Reservoirs and Irrigation Company, bringing the Lone Pine reservoirs into a larger irrigation system intended to divert more water into the Cache la Poudre River.¹¹ The company faced legal opposition against their irrigation plan and was eventually forced to close in the 1920s.¹² At this point in time, Akin held rights to House, Horseshoe, and South Lakes (now Ramona, Hiawatha, and Red Feather Lakes respectively), while the irrigation company controlled Erie, Snake, and Letitia Lakes.¹³

As local irrigation companies and governments argued over and developed the valley's irrigation system, more and more people moved to the valley to harvest timber used in constructing the nation's growing railroad lines. By 1900, at least five sawmills operated in the area.¹⁴ In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt established the Arapaho National Forest (eventually named Roosevelt National Forest) that included land directly bordering the west of the lakes in the valley, raising concerns about water rights.¹⁵ Several sawmill operators opposed the creation of the National Forest, but most locals' daily life was not affected by the decision.¹⁶

While many area residents focused on ranching to make a living, a few select citizens saw tourism and recreation as the future of Red Feather Lakes. According to *Red Feather Lakes: The First Hundred Years 1871-1971*, "the only people who were thinking about the recreational aspects for a wider public were the Akins."¹⁷ The family encouraged the Fort Collins YMCA to establish a summer camp for boys along the North Lone Pine in 1919. In 1921, the camp moved to nearby Lake Erie.¹⁸ Over time, more residents welcomed the Atkins' idea that tourism could bring prosperity to the area.

Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association

When Dr. D. O. Norton built a lake cottage south of what is now known as Lake Ramona in 1922, Myron Akin, Norton, and ten other families developed a group ownership plan for the forty acres surrounding the lake.¹⁹ The following year, many of the same locals (Akin, Norton, B. H. Princell, S. Marvin James, and George H. Shaw) incorporated the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association to promote real estate and recreational development in the Lone Pine area.²⁰

Norton came up with the idea to name the community Red Feather Lakes after speaking with Princess Tsianina Redfeather after a local concert. Princess Tsianina Redfeather was an Indigenous singer and actress who gained fame performing for U.S. soldiers during World War I.²¹ To gain attention for their project, the promoters of the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association claimed that the grave of Princess Redfeather's grandfather was in the Lone Pine valley. They went as far as to

¹¹ Ibid., 11-12.

¹² Ibid., 14.

¹³ Ibid., 27.

¹⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵ Ibid., 21.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 23.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 27.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

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produce a short film about the “discovery” of the grave and showed the film at the Lyric Theatre in Fort Collins in 1924 to advertise the real estate available in the region.²²

In the early twentieth century, entrepreneurs in the west, like those that made up the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association, often used Native American culture, or stereotypes of Native culture, as a marketing tool to encourage tourism and migration to the region. American society saw Native culture as wild, exotic, and glamorous and many white Americans were curious to experience that culture on their vacations in the west.²³ The Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association took full advantage of this marketing trend to sell more land lots and vacation rentals in the area. The promoters changed the names of the local lakes to keep with the “Native” theme—“Mitchell Number 1 was changed to Hiawatha, Number 3 to Red Feather, Number 4 to Apache, Number 5 to Nokomis, Number 6 to Papoose, Number 7 to Shagwa, Erie to Pocahontas, Snake to Owassa and a projected one to be called Minnehaha.”²⁴ However, for unknown reasons, the public rejected Pocahontas and Owassa and those lakes kept their original names.²⁵

The Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association used a wide variety of advertising techniques to try and sell lots and cabins in the new town. They printed brochures and maps and hired salesmen on commission to distribute them around Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and even as far as Minnesota and New York.²⁶ The organization also gave away 100,000 red feathers as an advertising ploy.²⁷

Considering that the area had only a handful of residences and no modern conveniences, the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association’s goals for the new town were ambitious. In 1923, the association promised interested buyers “refreshments, water, electric conveniences, stables, and other advantages,” but none of these amenities existed yet.²⁸ Another promotional organization, the Red Feather Hotels, Inc., planned to build a hotel, stables, dance halls, and garages.²⁹ Over the next few years, these organizations worked as quickly as possible to construct the facilities that they had promised to potential landowners. They finished building a nine-hole golf course and a hotel overlooking Hiawatha Lake in 1924.³⁰ The community rejoiced when a new clubhouse opened in 1928.³¹ Coaxed by the advertising and new construction, more and more people looking for summer vacation homes in the mountains purchased lots and cabins in the town. On May 28, 1928, a Fort

²² Ibid.

²³ Carson Bear, "From False Advertising to Cultural Exchange: Native Americans, New Mexico, and Route 66," National Trust for Historic Preservation, August 20, 2018, https://savingplaces.org/stories/from-false-advertising-to-cultural-exchange-native-americans-new-mexico-and-route-66#.XPz4oi3Mw_U, accessed June 18, 2019.

²⁴ Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 31.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning on June 19, 1974,” interview by Jonathan Anderson, Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, Red Feather Lakes, CO. Available at: <http://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Ted-Dunning-oral-history.pdf>

²⁷ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning.”

²⁸ Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 31.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 40.

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Collins newspaper reported that there were two hundred and fifty cottages and twenty-four tourist cabins recently built in Red Feather Lakes.³² The new town was growing.

The fruition of a silver fox farm was one of the biggest successes of the new town. The promotional organizations thought the farm would be a big tourism draw to the area. It opened in 1925 when twenty pairs of foxes and a manger arrived from New York.³³ The manager would invite visitors up to the cupola on top of the farm building to view the foxes below.³⁴ The market on foxes declined in the 1950s and Ray and Mary Galloup Stenzel bought the property, now referred to as "Fox Acres."³⁵

Despite the early success of the silver fox farm and other recreational facilities, the Red Feather Lakes promotional organizations faced many challenges and never sold as many lots and cabins as hoped. Some of the plans for Red Feather Lakes proved unrealistic and the geography of the area made many of the planned roads impossible to build.³⁶ Construction costs, especially for the roads, were much higher than expected and the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association soon faced financial troubles. Throughout the 1920s, other companies tried and failed to prosper from development plans in the area.³⁷ In 1929, local residents focused their efforts on improving the lakes and fishing with the hope of drawing more people to purchase cabins or lots in the town.³⁸ They raised two-thousand dollars to purchase fish from the Platte River hatchery that were then stocked in Red Feather Lake.³⁹ Residents were determined to keep their beloved mountain getaway alive even if it never became the major vacation destination that the Red Feather Mountain Lakes Association hoped it would be.

Post Office History

Early Post Office History

In 1893, Congress passed a program called the Rural Free Delivery service that granted rural areas greater accessibility to postal services.⁴⁰ Residents in the Lone Pine valley took advantage of the new program as soon as they could. Samuel Peery (also recorded as Perry) operated the first post office in the region out of his ranch house starting in 1896.⁴¹ The official name of this post office was "Westlake."⁴² In 1924, another post office was established nearby in an area referred to as "Log

³² Ibid., 44.

³³ Ibid., 34.

³⁴ "Red Feather Lakes Village History: Then & Now," PowerPoint presentation, Red Feather Lakes, CO, 2012. <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>.

³⁵ "Red Feather Lakes Village History."

³⁶ Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 31.

³⁷ Ibid., 44.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Universal Postal Service: A Policy History, 1790-1970," prepared for the Postal Rate Commission, 15 November 2002, 4.

⁴¹ "Red Feather Lakes Village History."

⁴² Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 18.

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Cabin.” Log Cabin Post Office was approximately seven miles southeast from today’s Red Feather Lakes Main Street and owned and operated by James Esterbrook.⁴³

Red Feather Lakes Post Office History

By 1929, G.C. Wallace was the postmaster at Log Cabin. He and his wife were some of the few year-round residents of Red Feather Lakes and very active community members. Mrs. Wallace started the first laundromat in town and around 1929, Mr. Wallace built and opened a general store later known as the Hilltop General Store.⁴⁴ In 1934, the couple started running a second post office out of their general store—this was the first official Red Feather Lakes post office.

Another local, Goldie Hastings, ran the Red Feather Lakes Trading Post, located on Main Street just north of Lake Ramona. At some point in the 1930s, Hastings took over the Red Feather Lakes postal duties from the Wallace’s and ran the post office out of the trading post.⁴⁵

At this time, the country was in the midst of the Great Depression. As part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal program, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built a camp in Red Feather Lakes. From 1935 until 1942, young men living at the CCC camp worked in the national forest and built County Road 69 that runs south from Red Feather Lakes to the Poudre Canyon. The post office not only benefited from this new road, but also from the business these young men brought.⁴⁶ Most of the men were from the Midwest and used the Red Feather Lakes post office to send and receive mail from home. Back then, the mail only came three days a week. On those days, the boys packed into the trading post to pick up letters and to send most of their \$30 monthly wage home to their parents—a stipulation of the CCC.⁴⁷

Booming Business During the Dunning Years

After fifteen years of business, Hastings sold the trading post in 1940 to a new resident of the community, Ted Dunning. Dunning was born in Nebraska in 1901. He moved to Sterling, Colorado, after his father died and then in 1928 moved again to Red Feather Lakes with his wife.⁴⁸ In May 1940, Dunning took over the trading post from Goldie Hastings and served as acting postmaster until October 4, 1940.⁴⁹ At that point, he was appointed official postmaster because, as he said during an oral history interview in 1974, “I knew some good politicians so I got to be postmaster. In those days, we were all good Democrats.”⁵⁰ Dunning was referencing the dominance of the Democratic party under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the 1930s and 1940s.

⁴³ “Red Feather Lakes Village History.”

⁴⁴ Ibid. The general store was located less than a mile west of the lumber company office that became the Red Feather Lakes Post Office in 1952.

⁴⁵ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning.”

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “Red Feather Lakes Village History.”

⁵⁰ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning.”

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When Dunning first became postmaster, his pay was not salaried. Instead, Dunning's wages came from commissions based on how many letters came through the office—he earned three cents per piece.⁵¹ Low wages were typical for rural postmasters at the time. The Pendleton Act of 1883 had created classifications for post offices based on their gross receipts.⁵² Because Red Feather Lakes' year-long population was so low in the 1940s, the postal service considered the post office as a fourth class office under the Pendleton Act classification system. Bigger offices in urban settings benefitted from the Pendleton Act because they had a constant flow of mail and rented many postboxes, unlike rural post offices which served much fewer citizens.⁵³

In 1952, Ted Dunning moved the post office from the trading post he had purchased from Goldie Hastings into a wood-frame cabin two buildings to the west. A local lumber yard erected the building in 1922 to serve as an office and living quarters.⁵⁴ According to Pat Clemens, president of the Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, the building was a rental cabin for several years in the 1930s, likely housing vacationers or people interested in buying property in Red Feather Lakes.⁵⁵

Dunning may have decided to move the post office out of the Trading Post and into its own building because two prosperous companies based in Red Feather Lakes depended heavily on the post office for business in the 1950s—*Homemaker* magazine and Red Feather Greens, Co. Jessie Young ran a small monthly magazine, called *Homemaker*, that she mailed from the Red Feather Lakes Post Office.⁵⁶ After earning success as a host of a radio homemaker show, Young decided to start the magazine in 1946. According to Evelyn Birkby, “each issue included photographs, letters, recipes, patterns, and helpful suggestions from family members and radio listeners.”⁵⁷ Ted Dunning explained that the post office mailed the magazine to twenty-five different states and that *Homemaker* “had a real nice circulation; that helped a great deal” [with business at the post office].⁵⁸

Another local company, the Red Feather Greens, Co, took advantage of the Red Feather Lakes post office. The company, started by Bonnie and Hugh Drake in the 1940s, produced Christmas wreaths. By 1952, Red Feather Greens shipped 6,000 wreaths each winter to 47 different states.⁵⁹ Up until the

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² “Pendleton Act,” United States Congress, January 16, 1882, “Transcript of Pendleton Act (1883).” Our Documents - Transcript of Pendleton Act (1883). Accessed June 25, 2019.

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=48&page=transcript>.

⁵³ Claire Prechtel-Kluskens, “First, Second, and Third Class Post Office Receipts and Postmasters’ Salaries, 1895-1905,” National Archives and Records Administration Washington, DC. 2014, 1.

⁵⁴ “Old and new post offices at R--,” Date unknown, Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, Red Feather Lakes, CO. The Red Feather Lakes Historical Society has a digital scan of this article, but the name and date of the newspaper are cut out of the scan. The article was likely published in the fall of 1969, but does not appear in the September, October, or November editions of *The Coloradoan*.

⁵⁵ Pat Clemens conversation with Andrew Olson and Leslie Moore, Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, Red Feather Lakes, CO, March 23, 2019.

⁵⁶ Evelyn Birkby, *Neighboring on the Air: Cooking with the KMA Radio Homemakers* (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 49.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 47.

⁵⁸ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning.”

⁵⁹ Mary Hagen, “She once employed the whole town,” *Fort Collins Review*, Fort Collins, Colorado, 27 July 1983.

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1950s, the post office in Red Feather Lakes Village only delivered mail three days a week, however, “the additional business from the greens project helped the Post Office expand to 6 days a week.”⁶⁰

By the time of his retirement as postmaster in 1966, locals referred to Dunning as “the dean of postmasters.” The size of his retirement party serves as a testament to Dunning’s and the post office’s importance to the town. In a 1974 interview, Dunning recalled, “by doggies, there were 135 people there. I was so surprised I didn’t know what to say. When I can’t talk, there’s something wrong.”⁶¹ Because residents frequented the Red Feather Lakes Post Office so regularly, they knew Dunning well and appreciated the services and environment he provided there for so long.

Modernizing During the Hurd Years

Before Dunning retired, Georgette “Georgie” Hurd started clerking in the post office. Hurd was born in Nebraska in 1928 and lived in California as a young adult but fell in love with Colorado’s vertical vistas when visiting extended family who lived in Red Feather Lakes. She and her husband decided to move to the town in 1959.⁶² When Dunning left his post in December 1966, Hurd was appointed acting postmaster.

Women postmasters were somewhat common in the National Postal Service, with slightly over forty percent of postmasters being women in 1949. Still, “postmistresses” did face opposition.⁶³ Hurd’s recollections of running a post office reveal both the friendly and sometimes contentious nature of small-town life. In an oral history from 2011, she recalled:

It takes a lot...you have to use a lot of discretion when you’re dealing with a little post office. You have to bend an awful lot – they don’t do that now. Public relations, that’s what I was trying to think of. I told everybody I was not a “postmistress” because I didn’t get paid enough to be anyone’s mistress. That’s what I used to tell them.... I used to have a little inch by inch notepad on the old scales that we had, and I said; “Please write your complaints here. Use only one sheet.” And it was like that, an inch by an inch.⁶⁴

Hurd took any complaints in stride and made sure the post office was a comfortable community gathering place:

It had a [propane] stove and a couch so people could come in and wait for their mail. The stove was right there to get warm by. They didn’t play [cards], but they had community get-

⁶⁰ Jean Drake Edmond, “Red Feather Greens: A history of Red Feather Greens and Bonnie and Hugh Drake from the 1940s to 1980, redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org. Accessed 29 March 2019.

⁶¹ “Oral Interview with Ted Dunning.”

⁶² “Interviews with Georgette Hurd, November 8, 2011 and January 17, 2012, at her cabin on Hiawatha Highway, Red Feather Lakes, Colorado,” Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, interviewed by Linda Bell, <http://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Hurd-FINAL-transcript-Addendum1.pdf>.

⁶³ “Women Postmaster,” United States Postal Service, 2008, 1, <https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-history/women-postmasters.pdf>.

⁶⁴ “Interviews with Georgette Hurd.”

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together. The guys would come in and sit there and talk and have a really nice time catching up on stuff. Then they'd get their mail and go home.⁶⁵

By the 1950s, there were approximately one hundred permanent year-round residents in Red Feather Lakes. These residents organized to bring electricity, a community building, fire station, new school house, two chapels, a library, and gourmet restaurant to the community.⁶⁶ When the postal needs of the community outgrew the small Red Feather Lakes Post Office in the late 1960s, residents decided they needed a new, modern building. The U.S. Postal Service constructed a new post office building on the adjacent lot to the west in 1969.⁶⁷

Still the acting postmaster, Hurd oversaw the challenging move in the Fall of 1969. She recalls: "Oh, when all the new equipment came in, yeah, I had to have the big safe moved over there. Some guy came with a big bucket on the front of a tractor and scooted under it and tilted it up and brought it over and moved it in. Yes, it did take supervision."⁶⁸ Postal services did not stop for a single day during the move.⁶⁹ Hurd was grateful to have a larger facility for post office operations:

The new post office was wonderful. I was ready to get out of that little one. I'm thinking maybe the one hundred boxes were in the old one. I don't remember just how many were in the new one, because we put a whole section in. When we started in the new post office there were some boxes vacant, but they filled up fast.⁷⁰

The Red Feather Lakes' postal service continues to operate out of the 1969 building. After five years working as the acting postmaster, Hurd became the official postmaster in March 1971.⁷¹ After the post office moved out, the wood-frame Red Feather Lakes Post Office became a commercial space. While exact date ranges are unclear, at some point before the 1990s the building housed a bookstore. For seventeen years, through the late 1990s and 2000s, Betty Pidcock operated the Village Antiques Collectables & Gifts out of the building.⁷² Around 2012, Anita Golden leased the building and turned it into The Village Emporium LLC.⁷³ Today, it is an unoccupied rental property.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Swanson, *Red Feather Lakes*, 63.

⁶⁷ "Interviews with Georgette Hurd."

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ "Red Feather Lakes Village History."

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SECTION V

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property

The nominated area consists of all the land historically associated with the property during the period of significance, 1952 to 1969, legally described as W 27 ft. of lot 2, block 30, Hiawatha Heights. It is unknown when Lot 2 was divided and if this occurred before, during, or after the period of significance.

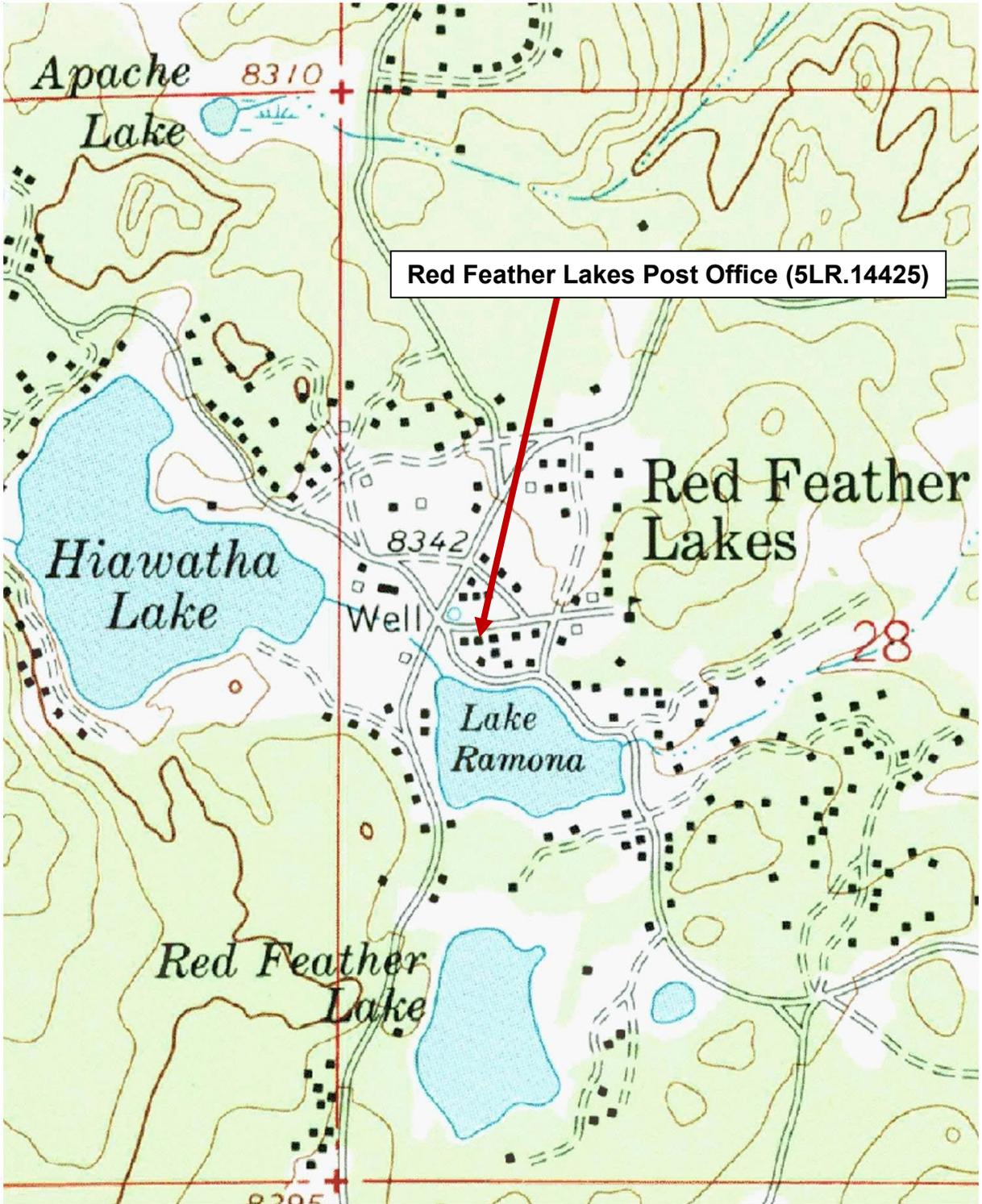


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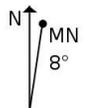
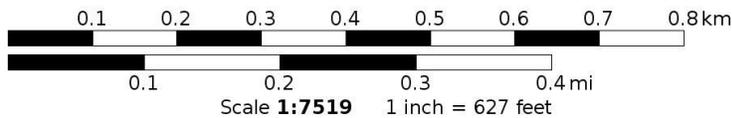
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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP



Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG Zone 13TDF
CalTopo

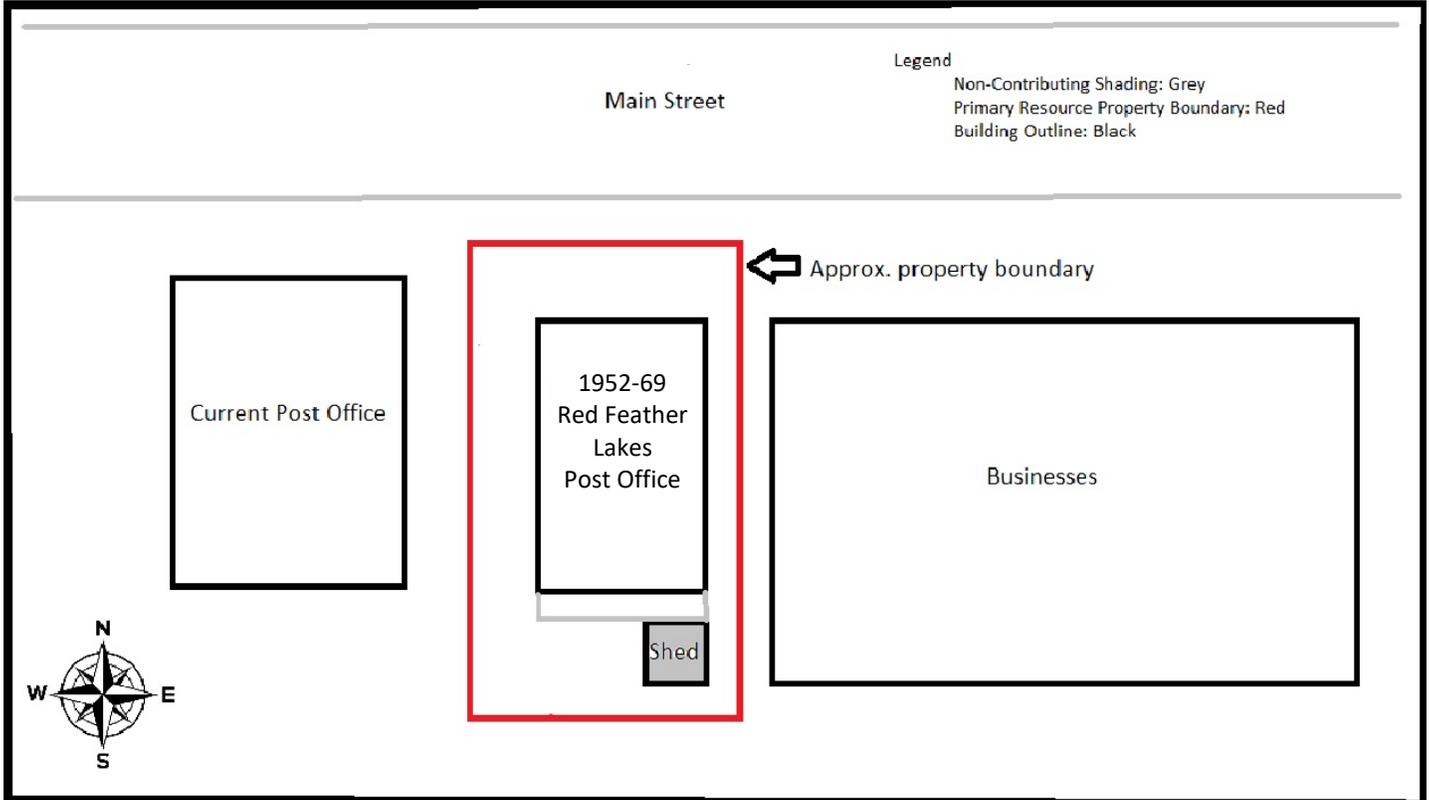


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SKETCH MAP



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SECTION VI

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photographs numbers 1 through 8, except as noted:

Name of Property: Red Feather Lakes Post Office
Location: Red Feather Lakes, Colorado
Photographer: Leslie Moore
Date of Photographs: March 22, 2019

Photo No.	Description of View and Direction of Camera
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- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1 of 8: | North and west sides, camera facing southeast. |
| 2 of 8: | North (front) facade, camera facing southeast. |
| 3 of 8: | North (front) façade, camera facing south. |
| 4 of 8: | North and east sides, camera facing southwest. |
| 5 of 8: | South side, camera facing north. |
| 6 of 8: | South and west sides, camera facing northeast. |
| 7 of 8: | West side, camera facing east. |
| 8 of 8: | Non-contributing shed, camera facing northeast. |

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS & FIGURES

Figure 1: Downtown Red Feather Lakes ca. 1953. 1952-69 Red Feather Lakes Post Office is the first building on the right. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

Figure 2: Georgette Hurd sitting in front of the Red Feather Lakes Historic Post Office, ca. 1960. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society Oral History Collection, Georgette Hurd Oral History, 2011 and 2012, <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/personal-histories/georgette-hurd-interview/>)

Figure 3: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, 1966. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society Oral History Collection, Georgette Hurd Oral History, 2011 and 2012, <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/personal-histories/georgette-hurd-interview/>)

Figure 4: Red Feather Lakes Post Office ca. 1969. (Clipping from unknown date and newspaper from Red Feather Lakes Historical Society (See bibliography "Old and New Post Office at R—"))

Figure 5: Red Feather Lakes Main Street looking east. The Red Feather Post Office is the second building from right to left. (*Fort Collins Coloradoan* Sunday, May 23, 1976)

Figure 6: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, ca. 1980s. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

Figure 7: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, ca. 1990. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

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Figure 8: Downtown of Red Feather Lakes; 1952-69 Red Feather Lakes Post Office second building on right, 2012. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

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Figure 1: Downtown Red Feather Lakes ca. 1953. 1952-69 Red Feather Lakes Post Office is the first building on the right. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)



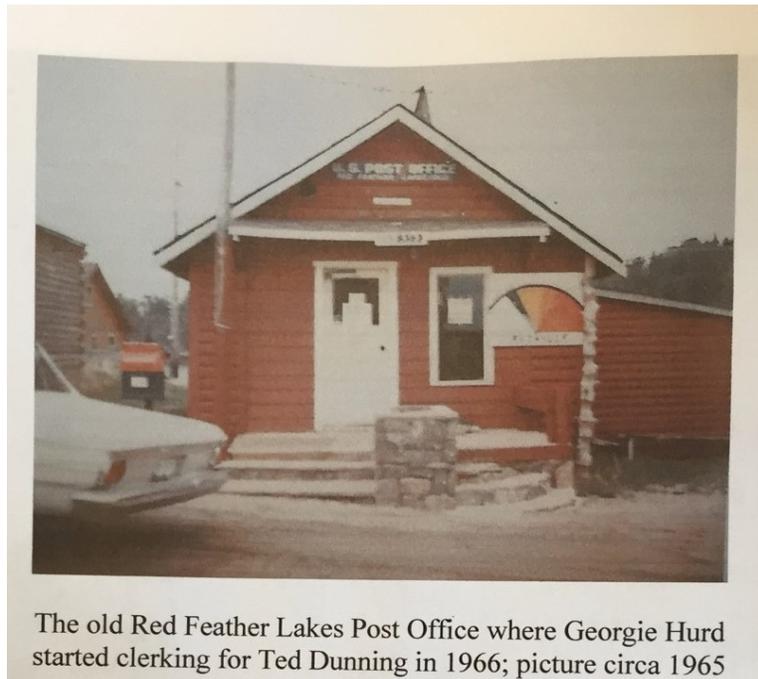
Georgie Hurd on a summer day at the Red Feather Lakes Post Office. Note the vacant lot to the west where the new post office will be built.

Figure 2: Georgette Hurd sitting in front of the Red Feather Lakes Historic Post Office, ca. 1960. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society Oral History Collection, Georgette Hurd Oral History, 2011 and 2012, <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/personal-histories/georgette-hurd-interview/>)

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The old Red Feather Lakes Post Office where Georgie Hurd started clerking for Ted Dunning in 1966; picture circa 1965

Figure 3: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, 1966. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society Oral History Collection, Georgette Hurd Oral History, 2011 and 2012, <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/personal-histories/georgette-hurd-interview/>)



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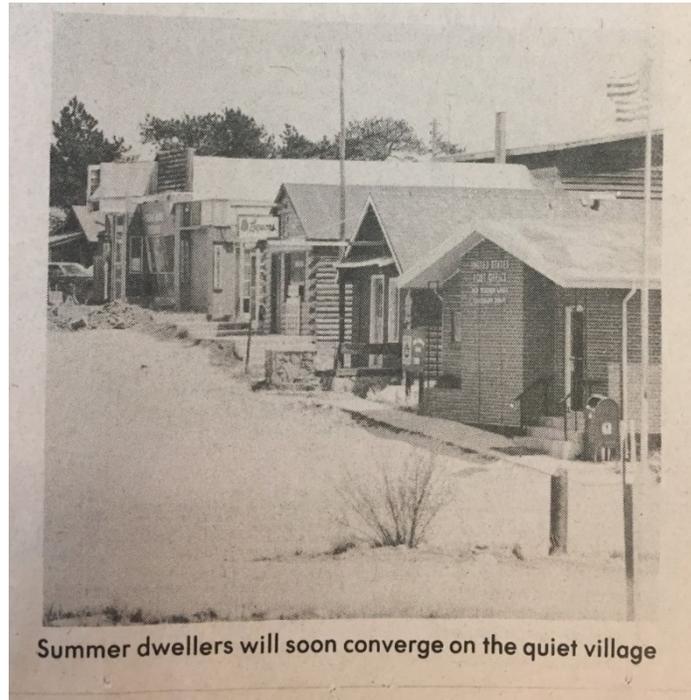


Figure 5: Red Feather Lakes Main Street looking east. The Red Feather Post Office is the second building from right to left. (*Fort Collins Coloradoan* Sunday, May 23, 1976)



Figure 6: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, ca. 1980s. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, “Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now,” <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

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Figure 7: Red Feather Lakes Post Office, ca. 1990. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)



Figure 8: Downtown of Red Feather Lakes; 1952-69 Red Feather Lakes Post Office second building on right, 2012. (Red Feather Lakes Historical Society, "Red Feather Lakes Village History – Then and Now," <https://redfeatherhistoricalsociety.org/local-histories/red-feather-lakes-history/red-feather-lakes-historic-then-now/>)

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