

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jacobson, Oscar Brousse, Cabin

other names/site number Sans Souci; Dowling, Phyllis Melton, Cabin; 5BL7894

2. Location

street & number 11288 State Highway 7 (11288 Peak-to-Peak Highway) [N/A] not for publication

city or town Allenspark [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Boulder code 013 zip code 80510-9615

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
[ ] entered in the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other, explain [ ] See continuation sheet.

Jacobson, Oscar, Cabin  
Name of Property

Boulder County, Colorado  
County/State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

**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.**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/camp  
OTHER: artist's studio  
DOMESTIC/secondary dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/camp  
DOMESTIC/secondary dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman (Rustic)  
No style

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/Sandstone; WOOD  
walls WOOD/Log; WOOD  
roof ASPHALT  
other STONE/Sandstone

**Narrative Description**

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

Jacobson, Oscar, Cabin  
Name of Property

Boulder County, Colorado  
County/State

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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### 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.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### 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  
# \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ART

### Periods of Significance

1931-1954

### Significant Dates

### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

Jacobson, Oscar Brousse

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Jacobson, Oscar Brousse

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Jacobson, Oscar, Cabin  
Name of Property

Boulder County, Colorado  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 454593 4454200  
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Adam Thomas, Architectural Historian

organization Historitecture, L.L.C.

date July 1, 2004

street & number Post Office Box 419

telephone (970) 586-1165

city or town Estes Park

state CO

zip code 80517-0419

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Clarice Aldridge Melton Revocable Living Trust (Phyllis Melton Dowling, Executor)

street & number 1010 Chautauqua Avenue

telephone (405) 364-7029

city or town Norman

state OK

zip code 73072

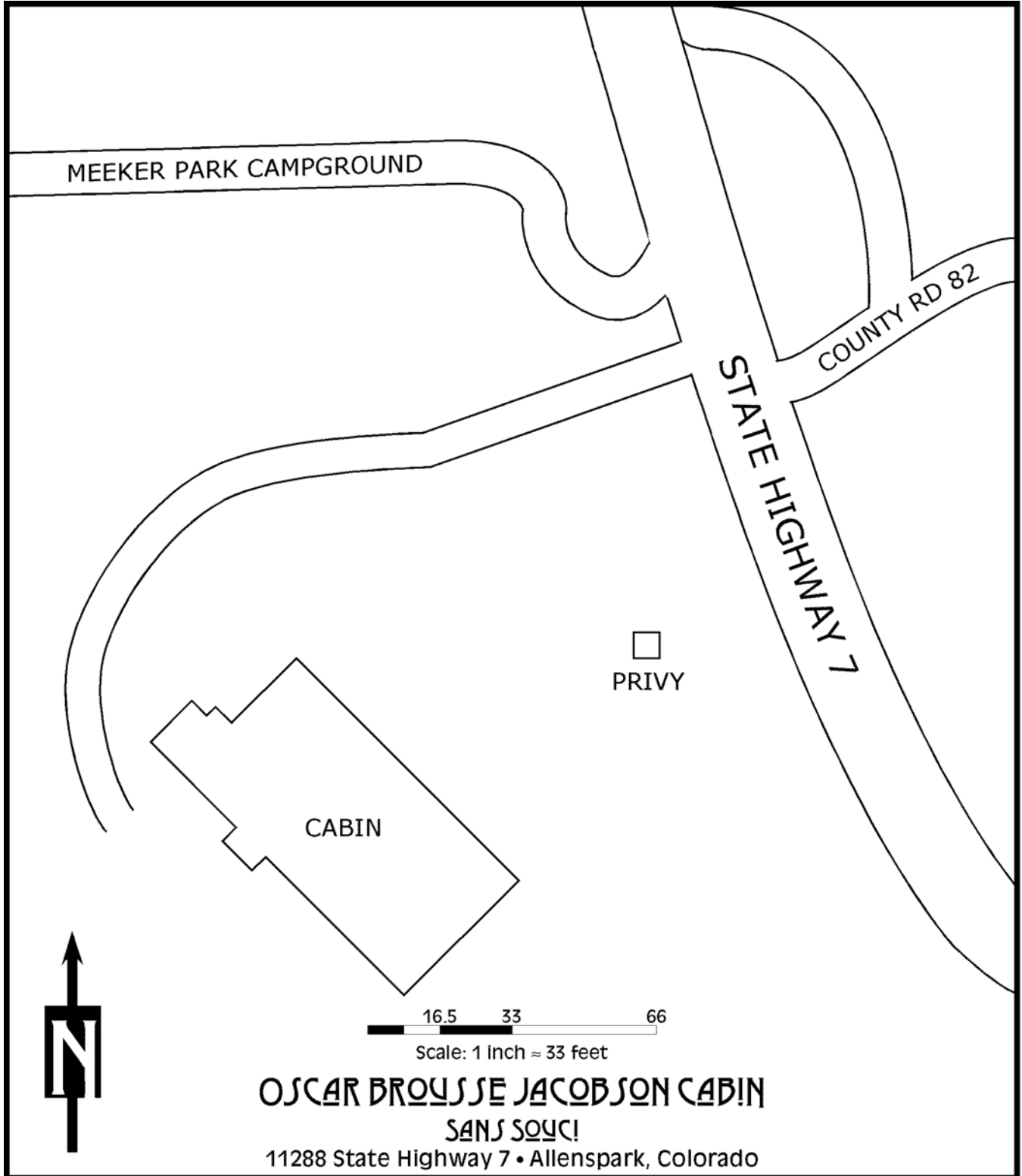
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**OSCAR BROUSSE JACOBSON CABIN**  
**SANS SOUCI**  
 11288 State Highway 7 • Allenspark, Colorado

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Oscar Brousse Jacobson Cabin is located in the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 11, township 3 north, range 73 west. It is constructed on federally owned land within Roosevelt National Forest, approximately a half mile east of the eastern boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park. Situated between the village of Meeker Park to the south and Camp St. Malo to the north, the cabin lies on the west side of Colorado State Highway 7, otherwise known as the Peak-to-Peak Highway. It is accessed from the northeast via a tenth-mile-long, winding, two-track driveway.

Terrain surrounding the cabin is relatively flat but rugged. While the elevation varies little from 8,550 feet above mean sea level, the landscape is strewn with large granite boulders and outcroppings. The vegetation is dense, with low-lying junipers, scrubby aspens and ponderosa pines, and tall firs and spruces. Looking to the north, breaks in the trees provide glimpses of Estes Cone and Mount Meeker.



The cabin itself is a one-and-a-half-story, rectangular-plan structure, measuring 19.5 feet northeast-southwest by 43 feet northwest-southeast. It is oriented to the southwest and rests on an uncut, uncoursed, sandstone rubble foundation. The stones vary in color from vivid pink to rusty orange. Located on the southeastern end of the rear (northeast) elevation, a small doorway interrupts the otherwise seamless foundation. It hosts an unpainted, rough-planed, vertical plank door, opening on metal strap hinges. A line of dry-laid and occasionally mortared stones protrudes outward from the rear (northeast) elevation and the southeastern end of the principal (southwest) elevation, forming planters. Near the center of the principal (southwest) elevation is a three-step, flagstone patio, wrapping

around the massive, sandstone hearth and chimney, which protrudes northwest of center on the elevation. The tapered hearth and chimney features bands of larger, sandstone boulders between courses of narrow, nearly rectangular stones. Carved into a stone at the center of the hearth and highlighted in white paint is "1933," the cabin's date of completion.

Walls consist of horizontal, round, peeled logs. The diameter of the logs becomes smaller from bottom to top; bottom logs measure 9 inches in diameter while those at the top are less than 6 inches. The wood strip chinking is secured behind a concrete daubing. The corners lack notching. Instead, the cut end of one log abuts the side of another, and the two are spiked together. The pattern is alternated with each course, providing the illusion of notched corners. The corners themselves are battered at a 15-degree angle, which is replicated in the cut of the protruding end of each log. Logs do not span an entire elevation. Instead, they are spiked into vertical log posts, corresponding to interior walls or placed on either side of a window or door opening. A few logs are spliced mid course with a 45-degree-angle cut.

Fenestration is asymmetrical and varies greatly from elevation to elevation. The principal (southwest) elevation features the following windows (from northwest to southeast): a three light hopper window; a nine-light hopper window; paired, nine-light hopper windows; and a six-light hopper window. All have wood frames and are unpainted, except for the single, nine-light hopper, which had a red-painted frame. The front door, which opens southeast of center of the southwest elevation, appears for the exterior to be constructed of wide, unpainted, rough-hewn wood planks. It opens behind an aluminum-frame storm door.

The northeastern third of the southeast elevation protrudes forward 5 feet from the rest of the exterior wall.

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This area contains a mudroom and built-in ice chest. Opening in the center of the protrusion's southeast elevation is a doorway. It contains an unpainted, rough-planed, vertical plank door, opening behind a wood-frame screen door. Northeast of the protrusion are paired, four-light hopper windows, with unpainted wood frames. Two two-by-four-inch boards, stacked on top of each other, form a band across the elevation, corresponding to the point at which the roof intersects the walls.

The southeast end of the rear (northeast) elevation hosts a six-light hopper window. A four light hopper window opens on the northwest end of the same elevation. Dominating the center of the rear (northeast) elevation is a band of seven, six-light windows. The band consists of central set of three, fixed-frame windows between two pairs of casement windows. All windows have unpainted wood frames. A galvanized metal pipe – the sewer vent – protrudes from the northwest end of the rear (northeast) elevation, emerges above the eave, and features an inverted funnel-shaped cap.

Unlike the rest of the cabin's exterior walls, the southeast elevation is symmetrical. On the main floor is a pair of six-light hopper windows. Above them, piercing the center of the gable, is a four-light awning window. It corresponds to a loft above the bedroom. All windows have unpainted wood frames. As on the northwest elevation, the southeast elevation has a band of stacked two-by-fours corresponding the junction of the roof with the wall.

Brown, rolled asphalt covers the side-gabled roof. The ends of rafters, which are small-diameter, round logs, are exposed. Log knee brackets protrude beneath the eaves on the gable ends. A stovepipe, corresponding to the stove in the kitchen, protrudes through the northwest end of the roof's northeast-facing slope.



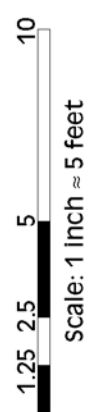
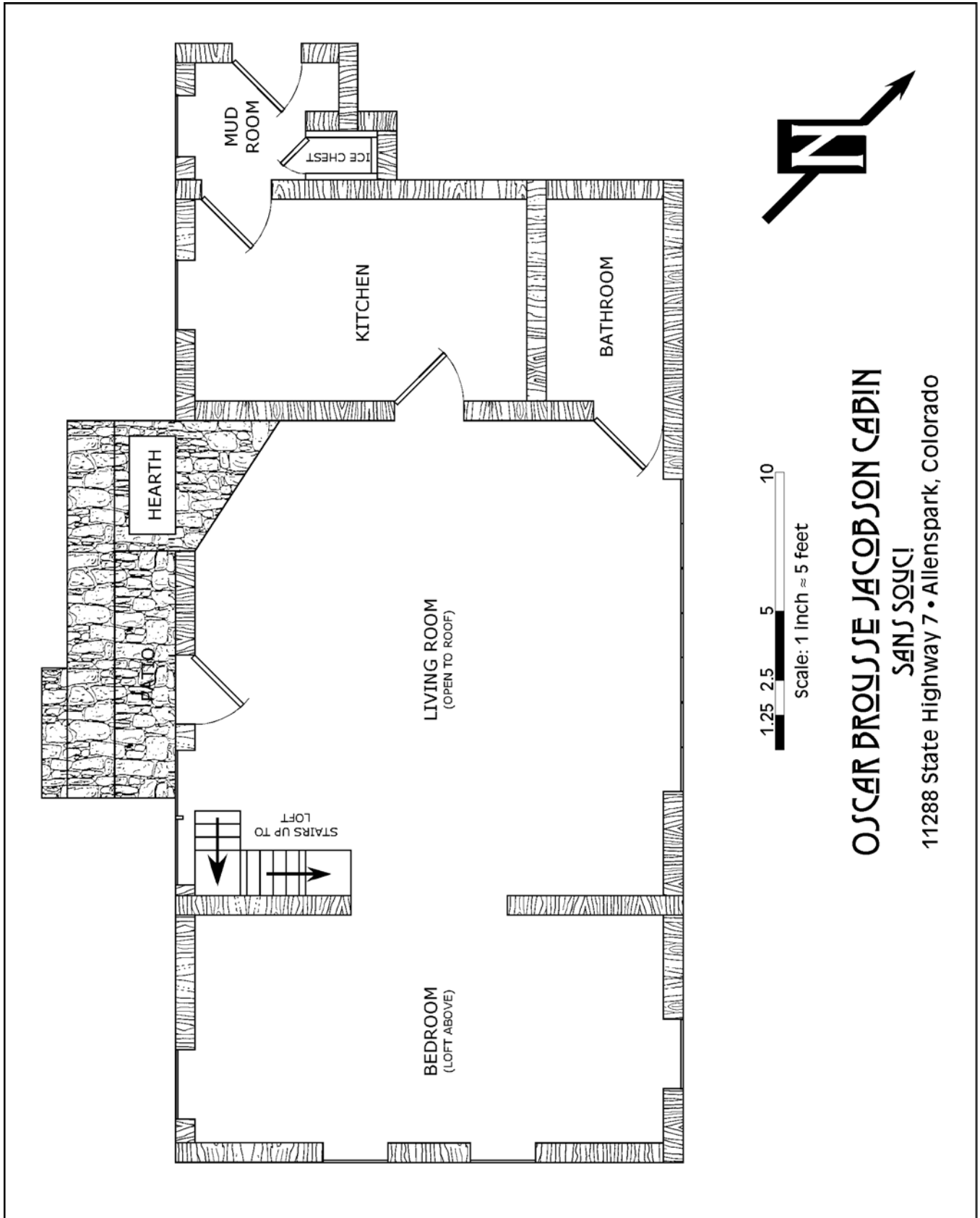
The interior features one large living room between a small kitchen and bathroom to the northwest and a bedroom to the southeast. It is accessed via a narrow stairway at the south corner of the main room. A loft exists above the bedroom. The exposed log walls have a soft, polished patina. Dominating the main room is a large, stone hearth at the west corner. The hearth steps back in a series of shelves from the protruding fireplace. The log roof trusses are exposed to the roof decking and host a variety of objects that are attached to the top of them or are suspended below them. Furnishings include a variety of chairs ranging from wicker to leather. A large, plank table is parallel to the band of casement windows on the northeast wall. The kitchen retains its original, wood-burning stove and another

rough-plank table. A built-in ice chest is located within the mud room, attached to the northwest elevation of the kitchen. Bedroom and loft have simple, small tables and mattresses.

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**OSCAR BROUSSE JACOBSON CABIN**  
**SANJ SOYCI**  
 11288 State Highway 7 • Allenspark, Colorado



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*Privy.* A privy is located approximately 80 feet from the cabin’s north corner. Unlike the house, the privy is laid out on the cardinal compass points. The rectangular structure measures 6 feet north-south by 4 feet east-west and lacks a formal foundation. Oriented to the west, the privy’s walls consist of unpainted, rough-planed, vertical planks. Opening in the center of the front (west) elevation is a vertical plank door on metal strap hinges. Green asphalt shingles cover the shed roof.



**Contributing Resources**

<u>Buildings</u>	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
Cabin	1	
Privy	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

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## SIGNIFICANCE



Oscar Brousse Jacobson

The Oscar Brousse Jacobson cabin is significant under Criterion B for its association with the internationally known artist and educator Oscar Brousse Jacobson, one of the foremost landscape painters of the twentieth-century American West, founding director of the School of Art at the University of Oklahoma, and a pioneer in the promotion of Native American art as fine art. His Meeker Park cabin was the center of his creative life, serving as his studio, a place of respite as well as inspiration, and a point of departure for his artistic forays into the American Southwest. The cabin was specially sited to take advantage of natural light for painting. Colorado's landscapes, particularly of the Rocky Mountain National Park area, loom large in Jacobson's portfolio, and his Meeker Park cabin is the subject of one of his canvases, completed in 1938.

The cabin is also significant under Criterion C as a relatively pristine example of the Rocky Mountain Rustic style. A natural setting and the use of log and stone characterize the style. Rustic log buildings vary from pioneer log buildings in that they often use manufactured building materials and components, such as window sashes, and exhibit more labor-

intensive features, such as stone hearths when simple metal flues would have sufficed. Rustic-style buildings were usually associated with vacation homes or tourist-related facilities. The Jacobson Cabin includes all of the features commonly found on Rustic buildings: log construction, overhanging roof, exposed rafter ends, stone chimney, and battered walls. The cabin also shows the influences of a local Meeker Park vernacular style, embodied in the nearby Meeker Park Lodge (5BL384). The key characteristics of this style are knee brackets and walls composed of uniformly-sized bays of horizontal logs spiked into vertical log posts. The Jacobson cabin is also significant under Criterion C because it was designed and largely constructed by Oscar Jacobson. The unusual hearth, tapered corners, and interior furnishings are all features created and installed by the artist. The entire cabin could be considered a Jacobson sculpture.



The period of significance begins in 1932, the first year of the cabin's construction. It continues until 1954, to accommodate the National Register's fifty-year rule. However, the period of Oscar Jacobson's occupation here continues through the summer of 1955.

## History of the Jacobson Cabin

Oscar Jacobson was born in 1882 in Westervik, Kalmar Lan, Sweden. Much of his childhood, however, was spent on his family's homestead near Lindsborg, Kansas, a settlement of Swedish immigrants. Jacobson attended Bethany College, in Lindsborg, where he studied art. The young painter's talents blossomed early and, at the age of 22, he supervised the Swedish exhibit at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, appointed as Attaché, Royale Swedish Commission. But this fair also provided Jacobson an opportunity to express what would become a life-long love affair with the American West: during the evenings he doubled as a cowboy rider for side-show performances.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leonard Good, "Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Art Pioneer, 1882-1966," in *Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Oklahoma Painter*, University of Oklahoma, Museum of Art (Norman, Ok.: by the author, 1990), 7; "Chronology," in *Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Oklahoma Painter*, 29.

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Jacobson's career continued to skyrocket after the fair. The painter became renowned for his boldly colored landscapes, which appeared to jut forth from their canvases. He painted and exhibited at French academies, including the Louvre in Paris. The artist accepted teaching positions at Minnesota College (1909 to 1911) and the State College of Washington (1911 to 1915). He earned his Master of Fine Arts degree from Yale University in 1916. Described as "tall, vigorous, and handsome," Jacobson was also flamboyant. While at Yale he was a thespian, acting with the Ben Greet Shakespearian Players; he was the captain of a pleasure yacht; he dabbled in commercial photography; and he moonlighted as a plainclothes policeman in New Haven.<sup>2</sup> He eventually married an attractive, outgoing French woman, Jeanne "Sophie" d'Ucel. Upon their marriage, Oscar adopted "Brousse" as his middle name. It was a name from Jeanne's family, but she was the last of the line. The Jacobsons then passed the name along to their children.<sup>3</sup>

In 1915, Jacobson became the first director of the University of Oklahoma's (OU) fledgling School of Art and founder of its Museum of Art – a position he would hold for the next three decades. When he arrived in Norman, Jacobson found a state devoid of any art museums or art schools. The only course of study for art at the university was extremely traditional and limited, consisting largely of tedious copywork. Jacobson revolutionized the art program at OU and introduced a "bright palette of French moderns so much better suited to the Midwest than 'old brown gravy' coloration." He assembled a faculty of like-minded instructors, including Edith Mahier, Gwen Meux (Waldrop), Ina Annette (Ewing), Dorothy Kirk (Preston), Mercedes Erixon (Hoshall), Laurence Williams, and Salvator Russo. In the spirit of the popular Arts and Crafts movement, Jacobson also recognized the utilitarian aspect of art and brought woodcrafters and potters into the art department. One of these, John Frank, was recruited from the Art Institute of Chicago; he went on to found a successful ceramics company, Frankoma Pottery.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond being a prominent painter of the landscapes of the American West, Jacobson was the first art authority to recognize Native American art as fine art. "Oscar Jacobson...nurtured many of the state's outstanding artists," notes private collector Mark Everett, M.D., "as well as virtually created what came to be known as Native American Art."<sup>5</sup> His interest in Native American art eventually led him to develop a course of study for Indian artists. In 1926, he invited five Kiowa Indians from Anadarko to study at the university. Jacobson supplied them with all the materials, instruction, and mentorship they desired. He arranged exhibitions of their work and reproduced them in portfolios. One portfolio published in France was an unprecedented success. Known as the "Kiowa Five," each of artists went on to obtain international acclaim: Steve Mopope, Jack Hokeah, Monroe Tsatoke, James Auchiah, and Spencer Asah. Jacobson's promotion and appreciation of Native American Art are, besides his own works, Jacobson's most important and lasting contribution to art in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Jacobson's interests in the Southwestern art led him to lecture and exhibit in Colorado. He was director of the Broadmoor Art Academy, Colorado Springs, in 1924, a visiting lecturer at the University of Colorado in Boulder during the summer of 1936, and guest lecturer at the Denver Art Museum. In 1940, the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center invited Jacobson to exhibit his art at its *West of the Mississippi* exhibition.<sup>7</sup>

Not surprisingly for the flamboyant painter, Jacobson's public and private lives often blurred together. This was best expressed in the two houses he had designed himself, both of which were created with entertaining in mind. Jacobson's Oklahoma house and Colorado cabin were unique from each other and from all other

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Phyllis Melton Dowling, "The Meltons and the Jacobsons: Two Families of Friends," *Crosstimbers* [journal of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma] (Spring 2002): 32.

<sup>4</sup> Good, 7; "Chronology," 29; Jacobson House Native Art Center, "Oscar Brousse Jacobson: 1882-1966" [article on-line]; available from <http://www.jacobsonhouse.com/oscar.html>; Internet; accessed 11 June 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Everett, Forward, in *Early Oklahoma Artists and Master Teachers: JRB Art at the Elms*, JRB Arts, (Oklahoma City: by the author, 2004), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Good, 3-4; "Oscar Brousse Jacobson: 1882-1966.

<sup>7</sup> Edwin J. Deighton. "Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Oklahoma Painter," in *Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Oklahoma Painter*, University of Oklahoma, Museum of Art (Norman, Ok.: by the author, 1990), 3-4.

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houses in their areas. His Norman home was located on the northwest corner of the campus of the University of Oklahoma. Officially classified as an example of “eclectic Italian Renaissance architecture,” Jacobson called it “Pompeian.” It was the only house of this style in Norman. The dwelling featured a flat roof, wide projecting eaves, use of Roman Doric order details, stucco wall covering, and rectangular window and door penetrations. Decorative elements reflected Jacobson’s international roots and interest in the American Southwest. Some have described the home as the artist’s interpretation of a typical Santa Fe dwelling. Some of the brackets are Swedish details. But perhaps the house’s most unusual feature was one that also dictated the design of his Colorado cabin – the blurring of lines between interior and exterior spaces:

Certainly the most remarkable feature of [the Norman] house was its unified progression of spaces extending from front porch inside to main living area to rear deck to open courtyard and landscaped areas. In an era when an east-facing front porch was considered desirable, Jacobson chose to focus outdoor living on the cool, private rear courtyard while placing his front porch on the west, facing the street.

This house was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. It is now owned by the Jacobson Foundation and home to the Jacobson House Native Art Center.<sup>8</sup>

Oscar Jacobson’s second home was a small, mountain retreat in Roosevelt National Forest, at Meeker Park, near Allenspark, Colorado. Oscar and Jeanne, with their three children, began to spend their summers touring the American West in the 1920s. By the early ’30s, the family began to seek a permanent summer house in Colorado. In 1932, the Jacobsons leased from the U.S. Forest Service a beautiful speck of land on the east slope of Mount Meeker, where glimpses of rocky peaks broke between the limbs of ponderosa pines and aspens. They christened the place *Sans Souci* – without care. This motto almost always governed the lives of the Jacobsons as they returned to this place every summer for the next 24 years.<sup>9</sup>

Oscar Jacobson spent the summers of 1932 and 1933 constructing the cabin. Because the Great Depression restricted the family’s financial resources, Oscar decided to acquire a permit from the National Park Service to harvest fire-killed timber in adjacent Rocky Mountain National Park rather than purchase materials from a lumberyard. He hired large wagons, oxen, workmen, and a chuck wagon for the 40-mile round trip from the cabin site to the location of an old forest fire inside the park. While the endeavor took more than a month to complete, Jacobson, with his fascination for the hardy western frontiersman, undoubtedly loved every minute of the adventure. He situated the cabin between large, lichen-covered boulders; the sandstone foundation, patio, and large hearth, once in place, appeared to be organic extensions of these monoliths. In addition to performing much of the construction work himself, Jacobson carefully planned every minute detail of the cabin. He envisioned it as both a place to create and an *objet d’art* itself. He purposely oriented the structure at an angle to the cardinal directional points to capture the natural light he desired for painting. (He would generally set up his easel in front of the band of large casement windows on the southeast elevation.) He discovered a water source a mile uphill from the cabin. He acquired the water rights and even located a pipeline for it.<sup>10</sup>

Oscar Jacobson obsessed over the cabin’s interior details. He carefully planned the locations of his artwork and even crafted some of the furniture himself, including a large dining table, Rustic kitchen table, and a desk with hutch. And friends who arrived in Meeker Park during the cabin’s construction were expected to help:

Joe Taylor, OU sculpture professor, was invited to come to the cabin in 1933 and arrived to find all of the furniture out in the front “yard” of the cabin. Oscar greeted him with, “Ah, you’re just in time to help me with the floor.” ...The standing joke in the OU Art Department... was to be careful about accepting an invitation to spend time visiting the

<sup>8</sup> William A. Mathes, National Register nomination form for the Oscar B. Jacobson House, 1 September 1986, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Dowling, “The Meltons and the Jacobsons,” 32.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

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Jacobsons as one might have to help build something.

Taylor, one of Oklahoma's most prominent sculptors and an instructor of the cabin's current owner, contributed more than just a beautiful hardwood floor to the cabin. With a cold chisel and hammer, he engraved the cabin's date of completion, 1933, into a massive block of granite at the center of the hearth's exterior.<sup>11</sup>

Stylistically the cabin was both a recapitulation of the vernacular architecture that developed in the Meeker Park area during the first half of the twentieth century as well as an expression of Jacobson's own creativity. The cabin embodied the Rustic style of the Rocky Mountain National Park area. Features of the style included log construction, a stone foundation, small-paned windows, an overhanging roof, and battered walls. All of these features were present in the Jacobson Cabin.<sup>12</sup> The most interesting features were the battered (tapered) corners. Corners like this do not appear elsewhere in the Meeker Park area. The prominence of this feature in Jacobson's 1938 watercolor of the cabin suggests that Jacobson himself considered the unusual corners the cabin's most outstanding architectural element.



*Sans Souci* depicted in an untitled watercolor by Oscar Jacobson, 1938. Collection of Phyllis Melton Dowling, Norman, Oklahoma.

On the inside, the cabin was meant to be cozy and comfortable. Phyllis Melton Dowling, the cabin's current owner and herself an artist, first arrived here in 1943. Even in her youth, *Sans Souci* left a lasting impression:

I've never forgotten my first visit to the cabin and how lush it looked, with Navajo rugs everywhere and wonderful Jacobson paintings on all the walls. ...When one comes in the front door one faces a bank of windows with a view across Tahosa Valley to Twin Sisters mountain. An easel was set up to take advantage of the light from the windows. The fired-timber log walls were warm gray with soft orange-brown grain

showing; also, in a few inconspicuous spots, patches of char, still showing. Simple, comfortable furniture was arranged around the room. There were natural wicker chairs with cushions, director's and captain's chairs stained pale blue-gray. There was the large, Jacobson handmade table as well as a similar desk and hutch—all stained the same soft blue-gray. At 8 years old I didn't understand how simple grace was accomplished with unifying colors and use of space but a great deal stuck in my young visual memory to resurface later in life.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Denver: OAHP, 2003), 52-3.

<sup>13</sup> Melton, "The Meltons and the Jacobsons," 36.

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While his Norman house was home to Oscar Jacobson the professor and administrator, the cabin in Meeker Park was the center of Jacobson's creative life. "As soon as he could return home from Commencement ceremonies, the professor would toss his academic cap and gown into a corner, load his beautiful French wife and their three children into the family Ford (later a Packard almost a city block long) and drive to the cottage near Allenspark, Colorado," writes former Jacobson student Leonard Goode, who himself became a professor of art at OU. "From there he would make forays into New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada, getting acquainted with the Indians, traders, and other artists continually painting and collecting."<sup>14</sup> Many of Jacobson's completed paintings feature scenes from the Rocky Mountain National Park area and around Colorado. These include an untitled watercolor of the Meeker Park cabin (1938); oil-on-board *Mount Meeker* (1935); oil-on-canvas *Uplands, Colorado, From the Trail Ridge* (1936); oil-on-canvas *In the Wild Basin* (1939); colored-pencil *One of the Twins, Colorado* (1950); oil-on-canvas *Mountain Cabin, Old Fall River Pass* (1951); oil-on-canvas *Engineer's Mountain Near Silverton, Colorado* (1958); and oil-on-canvas *Golden Aspens, Colorado* (1963).<sup>15</sup> Those "forays into New Mexico..." almost always included a visit to Santa Fe. Jacobson was a respected and active member of the city's thriving art scene and its principal proponent of Native American art.<sup>16</sup>



*Mountain Cabin, Old Fall River Pass.* Oscar Jacobson, 1951.  
University of Oklahoma Museum of Art, Norman, Oklahoma.

While life at the cabin was purposely slow-paced, social events were frequent. *Sans Souci* was a center of social life in Allenspark, with friends and neighbors coming and going. The highlight of each summer at the cabin was an exhibition of Jacobson's own works. The artist covered the log walls and plank doors with his paintings; each year he sold enough of them to cover the summer's expenses. The weekend-long event enticed friends for the art department at the University of Colorado in Boulder to journey to Meeker Park. Artists from all around Denver joined them. Jeanne and her daughters would bake cookies in the old, wood-fired stove that still remains in the kitchen. She served gallons of tea. A fine linen tablecloth, with small, linen tea napkins, covered the rugged dining table – a bit of sophistication in the rustic environs.<sup>17</sup>

Each summer *Sans Souci* hosted a number of distinguished guests. One of the most prominent was Birger Sandzen, who was Jacobson's instructor at Bethany College and a fellow Swedish immigrant. Sandzen would become one of twentieth-century America's greatest landscape painters. Particularly notable were his fauvist-inspired paintings of the Great Smoky Mountains. The cabin eventually housed a woodblock print and small drawing by the artist. As mentioned above, Professor Joseph R. Taylor, a nationally recognized sculptor and OU faculty member from 1932 to 1969, was also a frequent visitor. Native-American anthropologist and gallery owner Charles Eagle Plume was both a guest of the Jacobsons and the cabin's subsequent owner, the Melton family. Oscar Jacobson had met author Upton Sinclair while attending Yale. The two continued a lifelong friendship. Sinclair was a guest at the Jacobson's Norman home and likely was also a guest at *Sans*

<sup>14</sup> Good, 3.

<sup>15</sup> University of Oklahoma, Museum of Art, *Oscar Brousse Jacobson: Oklahoma Painter* (Norman, Ok.: by the author, 1990), 22-24.

<sup>16</sup> Carol Whitney, "Oklahoma—Cultural Center of the Universe!" in *Crosstimbers* [journal of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma] (Spring 2002), 15.

<sup>17</sup> Dowling, "The Meltons and the Jacobsons," 40.

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*Souci*.<sup>18</sup>

Unfortunately, the Jacobsons were not able to spend every summer at their Meeker Park cabin without care. In the summer of 1945, Oscar and Jeanne's only son, Oscar Jr., began working as a mountain rescuer for the National Park Service. Late one evening, as young Oscar and his coworkers were returning to headquarters after a successful rescue, they lost control of their car, left the road, and crashed. Young Oscar was rushed to the hospital in Longmont, where his family met him. Oscar Jacobson, Jr., died that night. His family was devastated. In the niche of a west-facing granite ridge, they interred his ashes. In the concrete seal, the elder Oscar etched his son's name and dates. From this precipice, one could see the peaks of the Front Range or look down upon the family's beloved cabin. On a rock outcropping 30 feet southwest of the cabin, Oscar placed a simple wooden bench. From it, he could peer upward at the place where his son rested. The artist sat alone on the bench for two weeks, rousing himself only to eat and sleep. But upon his return to Norman that fall, Oscar Jacobson resumed his life without any outward expressions of sorrow. Apparently the solace of *Sans Souci* allowed Jacobson to cope with his loss. As Dowling observes, "He had faced down a problem he could not solve or make better despite his great stature, huge energy, and brilliant mind, but the strength within him served." The ashes of the elder Jacobson and his wife were later interred beside their son, in 1966 and 1968 respectively.<sup>19</sup>

As Oscar Jacobson's health declined in the 1950s, his trips to his high-altitude retreat became more strenuous. A difficult summer in 1955 proved to be Oscar Jacobson's final season at *Sans Souci*. His doctor had told him that the high altitude aggravated his angina. But the cabin was not about to sit vacant. In 1956, the Jacobsons sold the retreat to their close friends, the Frank Armon and Clarice Melton family.

Frank Armon Melton was born in Cuba, Kansas, on July 6, 1896. His family moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma Territory, in 1900. He graduated from the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Oklahoma State University) in Stillwater at the age of 18; he had skipped high school entirely. He served as a captain in the army through World War I. At the end of the war in 1919, Melton attended the University of Missouri where he took his first class in geography, which began his self-proclaimed "lifelong love affair with the earth." In 1924 he received *cum laude* his Ph.D. in geology from the University of Chicago.

In 1924, Melton accepted his first teaching position, at Columbia University in New York City. He served briefly for the United State Geological Survey as a field geologist in Gold Hill, Utah. Melton arrived at the University of Oklahoma in 1926 where he was a professor in the School of Geology and Geophysics until his retirement 41 years later in 1967. In 1928, Melton took a leave of absence to study at Columbia, where he met and courted Oklahoma-native Clarice Aldridge. They married in 1929. With his wife, Clarice, Frank Melton had two children: Mark and Phyllis (Dowling). (Frank Melton's oldest daughter, Jane (Wilder), was born of previous marriage.)

Melton established himself as an international authority on the use of aerial photographs in photogeologic exploration and geomorphology. He had discovered the usefulness of aerial photographs in geology



<sup>18</sup> Dowling, interview by Adam Thomas, 11 June 2004; Dowling, "The Meltons and the Jacobsons," 40.

<sup>19</sup> Dowling, "The Meltons and the Jacobsons," 36.

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instruction in the 1920s. In 1938, he offered at the University of Oklahoma the first formal course taught anywhere in the world in which aerial photographs were used as a main teaching device in interpreting geologic processes and landforms. Melton's techniques proved invaluable during World War II when he used aerial photographs to select terrain suitable for tank maneuvers and, later, used photogeology to search for uranium deposits for the Atomic Energy Commission. After the war, Melton's techniques became a standard method for discovering potential petroleum and metallic mineral resources.

Melton's desire to view every square inch of the Earth's surface drove a passion to collect aerial photographs. In 1933 he purchased 20 tons of aerial photographs from the United States Department of Agriculture. At the time of his death in 1985, Melton's collection consisted of 13,000 photo-index sheets and 200,000 contact-print aerial photographs, valued at about \$750,000. It was believed to have been the largest collection of aerial photographs ever acquired for the use of a single individual. While Melton was fascinated with the geology of the entire planet, he concentrated on the south-central and southwest United States, including Colorado.



The Melton-Jacobson family friendship began when Frank Melton arrived in Norman in

Jacobson's handcrafted Viking ship still lurks on a beam above the living room in *Sans Souci*.

1926. He rented an apartment two blocks away from the Jacobson house. That summer, the Roman Catholic congregation of Mater Admirabilis was constructing a new church in the neighborhood. In the cooling evenings, residents would stroll to the construction site. It was here that Melton and Jacobson became acquainted with each other. They probably first met at one of the many social functions organized to introduce incoming faculty to the established academic community at the university. When Melton returned to Norman with his new bride in the fall in 1930, his first visit was to the Jacobson house. Because Clarice Melton was a French scholar, she and Jeanne Jacobson had an instant bond, chatting away in Mrs. Jacobson's native language. The Meltons and Jacobsons would remain close friends for the rest of their lives.

"Dad's bathtub," Jacobson's wicker chair in *Sans Souci*.

The Meltons first came to the Meeker Park cabin in 1943. For many, the automobile trip from Norman to Denver would have been impossible because of gasoline rationing during World War II. However, the Department of Defense

had issued Frank Melton a "C" card for unlimited gasoline. The official reason for this gesture was that Dr. Melton was needed in Denver to teach other geologists how to find oil and gas using aerial photographs. However, the actual and clandestine reason for the trip was, under the auspices of the burgeoning Atomic Energy Commission, to teach others how to use aerial photographs to find deposits of uranium. In August, the Meltons settled in at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver. A week later, they drove to Meeker Park for their visit to *Sans Souci*.<sup>20</sup>

But it would be more than a decade after this first visit to *Sans Souci* that the Meltons would return to the cabin. The Melton children had attended the Cheley Camps in the Estes Park area beginning in 1942. Phyllis Melton Dowling remembers passing by the Jacobson's mailbox along State Highway 7 while on camp outings, "but our paths only crossed in Norman during the school year." Amazingly, despite returning to the same area of Colorado summer after summer, the Meltons and Jacobsons did not cross paths here until 1955. That year, Phyllis was attending the summer term at the University of Colorado at Boulder. While at a screening of an animated version of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, she ran into Oscar and Jeanne Jacobson during what would become the artist's final summer in the state. In June 1956, Jeanne told Clarice Melton that they would not return to *Sans Souci* that summer. A week later, at an evening visit to their home, Oscar

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.



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Jacobson approached Frank Melton about assuming the land lease and purchasing the cabin. The Meltons agreed to the deal, which also included three adjacent but unimproved parcels that the Jacobsons had later acquired. That summer, Phyllis, her husband, John, and Clarice accompanied Jeanne to Meeker Park, where Mrs. Jacobson showed them around the cabin and introduced them to their Allenspark friends. *Sans Souci* remains in the Melton family today through the Clarice Aldridge Melton Revocable Living Trust, of which Phyllis Melton Dowling is the executor. Phyllis has returned to *Sans Souci* almost every summer since her parents purchased the property.



Today, the cabin and its furnishings appear much as they did when the Jacobsons summered here. Jeanne removed few items from *San Souci*, choosing instead to give the objects and all of their associated traditions to the Meltons. Among the objects still in the cabin is an unusually long, wicker chair. Christened “dad’s bathtub” by the Jacobson children, this chair was meant to support Oscar’s gangly frame. A large travel poster is a souvenir from the Jacobsons’s 1925-26 trip to Algeria. Oscar Jacobson’s hand-crafted tables and desk are still there, along with the old treadle sewing machine he often used. The Oklahoma state flag in the cabin was a handmade appliqué created for the Jacobsons by Louise Fluke, the flag’s original designer. Mounted to a beam above the center of the cabin’s main room is Oscar Jacobson’s handcrafted Viking ship. Measuring about a foot long, the ship has rows of little oars and a sail. Protruding from the bow is a sea monster figurehead. An adjacent beam hosts an 8-inch tall penguin. Jeanne Jacobson crafted it from bits of silk brocade in black and white. It has eyes of bright, ruby-red rhinestone buttons. During the winter the penguin was protected beneath a paper sack. Each summer, when the Jacobsons arrived at *Sans Souci*, the youngest member of the family had the honor of unveiling the penguin once again. Phyllis Melton Dowling continues this tradition.<sup>21</sup>

For more than seven decades *Sans Souci* has been a place of relaxation and creative inspiration. It embodies the energy and imagination of its flamboyant creator. The cabin, like his paintings hanging in museums and private collections, is a genuine Jacobson. From this cabin, Oscar Jacobson launched forays into the rest of Colorado and the American Southwest, where he found subjects for his vivid landscape paintings while he supported and promoted Native American Art. After Jacobson’s last summer in his beloved *Sans Souci* in 1955, members of the Melton family have been strict and faithful stewards of both the cabin and the memory of its most famous inhabitant. According Phyllis Melton Dowling, Oscar Jacobson once remarked about the cabin, “I don’t want people to forget me there.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

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**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

Jacobson, Oscar Brousse, Cabin (5BL7894)  
11288 State Highway 7 (Peak-to-Peak Highway)  
Allenspark vicinity, Boulder County, Colorado

Adam Thomas, Photographer  
All photos taken on November 20, 2003.  
Negatives filed at the Boulder Public Library, Carnegie Branch,  
1125 Pine Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302.  
Phone (303) 441-3110.

<b>Neg.</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>View To</b>	<b>Description</b>
0	Cabin	West	Hearth and living room
1	Cabin	East	Travel poster from the Jacobsons' trip to Algeria, living room
2	Cabin	Northwest	Oscar Jacobson's model Viking ship, living room
3	Cabin	Northeast	Original wood-burning stove, kitchen
4	Cabin	North	Kitchen table constructed by Oscar Jacobson
5	Cabin	West	Detail of hearth, living room
6	Cabin	Northeast	Detail of casement windows and dining table, constructed by Oscar Jacobson, living room
11	Cabin	Southeast	View of driveway and cabin's northwest elevation
12	Cabin	South	Detail of ice chest protruding from northwest elevation
13	Cabin	North	Detail of corner treatment
14	Cabin	Northeast	Detail of front door, southwest elevation
15	Cabin	Southeast	Detail of kitchen door, northwest elevation
16	Privy	Northwest	South and east (rear) elevations
17	Privy	Southeast	North and west (front) elevations
18	Cabin	South	Northwest elevation
19	Cabin	Southeast	Northwest elevation
20	Cabin	South	Northeast elevation
21	Cabin	West	Southeast and northeast elevations
22	Cabin	Northwest	Southeast elevation
23	Cabin	North	Southwest (front) and southeast elevations
24	Cabin	Northeast	Detail of date carved into hearth.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of this property consist of the cabin and privy building footprints, patio, and driveway.

**Boundary Justification**

Legally, the cabin and associated features are described as privately owned improvements on government ground. In this case, the government ground is Roosevelt National Forest, administered by the United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture. This has been the legal arrangement of this property since the cabin's construction.