

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 10 1986
date entered 8-14-86

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Club Moderne

and or common Club Moderne

2. Location

street & number 811 E. Park N/A not for publication

city, town Anaconda N/A vicinity of

state Montana code 030 county Deer Lodge code 023

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Jack and Kathleen Francisco

street & number 811 E. Park

city, town Anaconda N/A vicinity of state Montana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Deer Lodge County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Anaconda state Montana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title HAER Butte-Anaconda Project has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Summer 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Montana State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Helena state Montana

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Club Moderne is a one story, rectangular-shaped, Art Moderne style building measuring 80' long and 24' wide, located at the corner of Park and Ash Sts. in Anaconda (1980 pop. 12,518). The main entrance, recessed in the curved northwest corner, is flanked by carrara glass covering all of the short facade along Park St. and a portion of the building facing Ash St. The lower half of the corner front is divided by horizontal bands of black, ivory and gray carrara glass and the upper half is embellished with tan panels. Two large, aluminum frame fixed windows pierce the north facade with one located on the west side of the main bar. A curving canopy of black and tan carrara glass covers the entrance and portions of the corner front. Borders and trim are finished in aluminum. Beyond the corner front pale yellow asbestos siding covers the building, punctuated by two wooden doors with circular windows and five smaller, fixed windows. The main door, side bar and side lounge doors were originally faced in cobalt blue, although this was removed at an unknown date. A large "CLUB MODERNE" marquise in front with smaller "BAR" and "LOUNGE" signs over the side doors are black with colored neon lights. These lighted signs clearly illuminate the building and "[a]t night the name of the club, the bar and lounge entrances stand out strikingly..." (Anaconda Standard October 9, 1937)

The interior of the Club Moderne is divided into a 24' X 25' front bar room and a rear cocktail lounge measuring 24' X 44'. Historical descriptions from the Standard are accurate today as the inside of the Club Moderne is almost exactly the same as when it was first built. The original Nu-Wood, acoustic tile ceiling and tiletex, mastic material floor are intact in the bar room. The front bar, which is from the original owner's first bar that was located next door, is an elaborate wooden art deco design with aluminum framed ceiling lights and mirrors. The rear cocktail lounge was described in the Standard as "elegantly appointed...the crowning achievement of the new building. Henna and tan are the colors carried out in the decorations. The lounge is the most modern from the ash tray columns to the bar taps." Six circular chromium floor tables covered with formica in an art deco design, and leather and chromium chairs are centered in the lounge. Nine booths around the outside of the lounge feature formica-topped tables supported by curved chromium legs and henna and tan leather-covered benches. Each booth has its own private juke box. The back bar is highly decorative with diamond-patterned henna and tan leather panels, back-lit glass shelving, a padded leather ceiling above the bar, and mirrored panels flanking a chromium cash register. Six chromium bar stools covered with henna and tan leather serve the bar area. "A beautiful rug, matching all other furnishings, covers all but a small dancing space." Large henna and tan leather panels forming a "V" shape cover the lower wall surface of the lounge. A large, attractive women's rest room with similar lighting, furnishings and color scheme is accessible from the lounge by a door with padded, henna leather and a circular panel in the upper part of the door. Indirect multi-colored, fluorescent bulbs that can be switched separately to create different lighting affects are covered by an overhang surrounding the perimeter of the ceiling and light the lounge. The original Nu-Wood ceiling was removed at an undetermined date.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1937

Builder/Architect Fred Willson, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1937, the Club Moderne is significant for its architectural design and interior furnishings as the most intact and striking example of the Art Moderne style in Montana. The state has a number of Art Deco- and Art Moderne-inspired buildings (apart from public buildings primarily cocktail lounges and bars), but most, if not all, have either been considerably altered or represent buildings from an earlier period that were remodeled in the 1930s to reflect current popular architectural styles. None of these buildings have such a high degree of interior or exterior integrity. By contrast, the Club Moderne was designed and built in the Art Moderne style, and retains almost all of its interior decorative furnishings and historic architectural integrity. The Club Moderne is also significant for its association with the architect Fred Willson, one of the most noted individual architects in the state during the first half of the 20th century.

While the Club Moderne is less than 50 years old, the building derives exceptional significance through its unaltered, outstanding Art Moderne architectural design features and interior materials and furnishings, nearly all of which were locally crafted by a variety of businesses in Anaconda. Based on historic and architectural inventories in dozens of communities throughout Montana, it is clear that no other building better illustrates the characteristics of the Art Deco or Art Moderne style than the Club Moderne. The Club further epitomizes the architecture of the Art Moderne style because it reveals the conscious effort by the owner to use machine-age building materials from the period to create a fresh, streamlined look that had no historical antecedent. When John Francisco consulted with a distinguished architect for his design, he made a deliberate attempt at creating what was certainly the most modern, attractive business establishment in Anaconda, if not in Montana.

The Club Moderne was constructed well after the majority of Anaconda's finest public and commercial buildings had been built in the late 19th century, when the town was known as the "Smelter City" and had the largest copper smelter in the world. Although it lost a bitterly fought bid to become capital of the state, Anaconda prospered and grew from a population of 9,450 in 1900 to its peak of 13,487 30 years later. The Great Depression impacted the community, resulting in a loss of about 2,000 residents by 1940. Yet, construction in Anaconda continued during the Depression era. Indeed, two other drinking establishments opened the same year as the Club Moderne, the Windsor Beer Parlor (918 E. Park) and Carmel Dire's Cocktail Lounge at 621-623 E. 3rd St., the latter of which is still in business.

John A. (Skinny) Francisco operated the Rustic Tavern from 1934-37 out of a brick building adjacent to what was at the time a vacant lot on the corner of Park and Ash. In 1937 Francisco closed his operation in order "to give Anacondans the finest he could possibly provide in the more modern cocktail lounge and

9. Major Bibliographical References

Anaconda Standard 9 October 1937

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Anaconda

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	2	3	4	9	8	2	5	5	1	0	9	8	6	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

North 80' of Lot 12, Block 25 of the Eastern Addition in Anaconda

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state None code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Koop, Survey Coordinator/National Register Assistant

organization Montana SHPO date May 15, 1986

street & number 225 N. Roberts telephone 406-444-7715

city or town Helena state Montana

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

MK pb

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Marcella Steffy*

title Montana SHPO date July 1, 1986

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 8/14/86

Keeper of the National Register *[Signature]*

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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bar." The Club, labeled an "ostentatious structure" by the October 9, 1937 Standard, cost \$25,000 to build and was considered "The Northwest's Most Modern and Beautifully Appointed Bar and Cocktail Lounge."

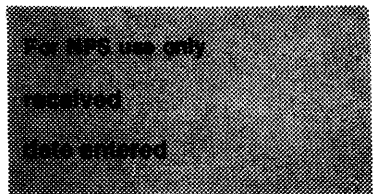
A host of local and area businesses were involved in the construction of the Club Moderne. W.P. Fuller & Co. from Butte, specializing in "Plate Glass, Window Glass, Mirrors and Wallpaper", and the Rexroad Art Tile Co. in Bozeman "Store Fronts a Specialty" were responsible for the glass windows and multi-colored carrara glass panels on the facade. Sullivan Paint in Anaconda installed the "glass and metal trim front", while Butte Neon designed the "illuminative signs and display." Interstate Lumber Co. from Anaconda provided "Cedargrain asbestos siding shingles (charming wood texture in shades of gray or copper)" and Nu-Wood walls and ceilings. Inside the Club "Formica new process doors, millwork and custom built Nu-Wood and chromium interior work" was completed by local builder/carpenter Frank Wullus. Jacobson Furniture Co. in Anaconda added aluminum Venetian blinds, chromium and leather furniture, mirrors and lamps, while two other local businesses, Duval Hardware and Marcotte Electric Co. installed the plumbing and lighting fixtures.

When the Club Moderne opened for business at noon on October 9, 1937, it was a grand and gala event in Anaconda. The Standard included an article about the Club and dozens of advertisements by businesses that were involved in the actual construction or who simply offered best wishes and saluted the owner, John "Skinny" Francisco. To commemorate the event, souvenir roses were given to all women, and an orchestra provided entertainment in the new "drinking casino" throughout the weekend. Etched liquor glasses also were made for the opening. Francisco was touted as an "ingenious owner [who] has added many original ideas in decorative and furnishing details, that blend a fine sense of quality and dignity with the gay but soft color of the interior." Indeed, both the interior and exterior of the Club Moderne fully characterize the Art Moderne style popularized in the United States from 1930-1945. Also known as Modernistic or Depression Modern, the style consciously strove for an architectural expression to compliment the machine age. The soft, round corners, flat roof, smooth wall finish without surface ornamentation, and horizontal band of windows on the Club Moderne collectively create a distinctive streamlined look common to Art Moderne design. Multi-colored mirrored panels add ornamentation, while aluminum and stainless steel are used for door and window trim. Also in keeping with the style are circular windows in doors, horizontal bands of reflective glass and a curved canopy over the entrance.

Fred Willson, the architect, was educated at Columbia University, receiving a degree in architecture in 1902. After several years of intermittent study and travel abroad, he returned to Montana and worked in Butte with the prominent architectural firm of Link and Haire. In ca.1910 he opened his own office in Bozeman where he practiced for the remainder of his life. During the more than 50 years that Fred Willson worked as an architect, he designed a large number of private residences and commercial and public buildings in Bozeman as well as throughout the state. He was responsible for the design of at least five

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buildings on the Montana State University campus and the Gallatin County Courthouse (1936). Willson designed freely in several architectural styles including the Spanish Colonial and Renaissance Revival, Art Deco and Art Moderne.

Although not yet 50 years old, the Club Moderne, with its curved exterior and impressive interior furnishings and decorations, possesses exceptional significance on the state level as the most intact example of the Art Moderne style in Montana. In its streamlined design, the Club Moderne manifests the simple, yet functional characteristics of the style that were inspired by America's affection for machines. Furthermore, the construction and opening of the building was a major local event that was seen as an expression of the modern age.