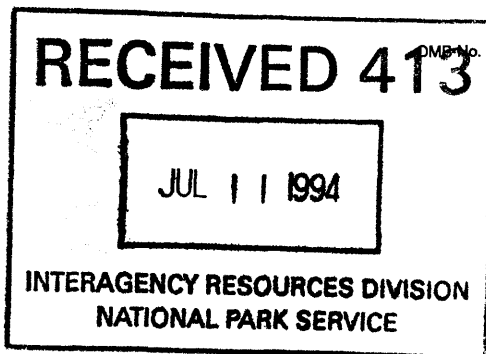


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DMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: H. Earl Clack Service Station

other name/site number: Clack Station

2. Location

street & number: Highway 2 (south side)

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Saco

state: Montana

code: MT

county: Phillips

code: 071

zip code: 59261

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 X 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.)

Mareille Sherry MTSHPD 6-24-94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 see continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the
National Register

 see continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the
National Register

 see continuation sheet
 removed from the National Register
 see continuation sheet

 other (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper
Entered in the National Register 6-16-94 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private & Public-local

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
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Category of Property: Building(s)

<u> 1 </u>	___ building(s)
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

___	___ sites
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___	___ structures
-----	----------------

___	___ objects
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Name of related multiple property listing:
Roadside Architecture Along US 2 in Montana

<u> 1 </u>	___ TOTAL
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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

Current Functions:

Recreation and Culture: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Modern Movement: Moderne

Materials:

foundation: concrete

walls: stucco

roof: asphalt

other: n/a

Narrative Description

The former H. Earl Clack service station in Saco, Montana is located near the center of town on the south side of US 2. The building is oriented parallel to the highway and adjacent to the city park. The building is on Burlington Northern (formerly Great Northern Railway) property, directly north of the railroad tracks. The station was operational from the early 1930s until 1957. Since the early 1960s the property has been leased by the City of Saco and the rest room facilities have been maintained as part of a community rest area/park.

The building is a relatively small, one-bay, flat roof, stucco-clad service station with a semi-circular canopy extending over the pump island. The office portion of the structure is located to the east while the service bay is attached to the west. A wood-paneled door with a fixed six-light window is located at the center of the office and is flanked by two 16-light fixed windows with wood surrounds. A pair of small 4-light casement windows are located along the east side of the office. The attached canopy is a wood-frame, metal clad rounded unit supported by two metal poles. The service bay is accessed via a large wood-paneled overhead door with sixteen fixed windows. There is also a small door leading from the shop directly into the office. There were formerly two windows along the back wall of the service area but they have been boarded over for many years. Raised chevrons are part of the exterior design. Three sets are visible, one at the upper right of the service bay facade, and one each in the upper forward corners of both the east and west walls.¹

Sometime in the 1960s after the City of Saco leased the property, a post and pole shelter was added to the east side of the station office. A flat corrugated roof covers the addition. It was most likely originally designed as a protected picnic site, adjacent to the city park, although there is little evidence today that it is used by visitors in this capacity.

The interior office space is arranged in the typical 1930s manner. The men's rest room is accessed from the inside while the ladies room is entered via an outside door, located to the rear of the east wall. All interior furnishings have long since been removed.

¹Chevrons were commonly found on H. Earl Clack stations across northern Montana. They were usually painted orange to match company signage.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

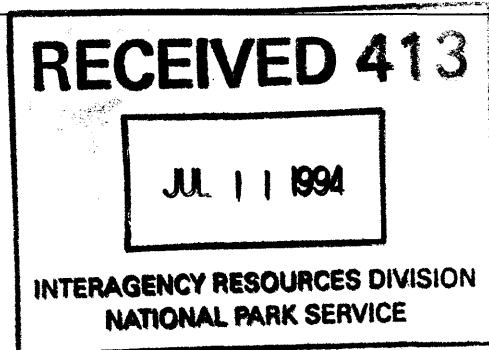
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Commerce

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a
Significant Person(s): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: ca. 1932-1944
Significant Dates: ca. 1932

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: H. Earl Clack



Narrative Statement of Significance

The former H. Earl Clack service station in Saco, Montana is a significant example of what was once an extensive chain of regional gas stations across Montana. Mr. Clack was an early 20th century businessman with interests in agriculture, real estate, and the petroleum industry. Corporate headquarters was in Havre although the company's business interests extended across the northern plains and into the Pacific Northwest. By the mid-1930s Clack had built a network of retail gasoline and bulk oil outlets from the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains in Washington eastward into western North Dakota. The orange and green Hi-Power logo could be found in virtually every community along the Montana Hi-Line. Clack outlets comprised the most extensive network of retail stations marketing regionally produced petroleum products in Montana prior to the Second World War. The H. Earl Clack gas station in Saco is one of a very limited number of stations remaining in Montana, and certainly one of the best preserved in terms of original architectural styling and materials.

H. Earl Clack was an early proponent of functional gas station design. Although his first filling stations were built in the classic 1920s domestic style, he was one of the first western retailers to adopt the more modern flat-roof design that came into vogue during the early 1930s. Most Clack stations, however, incorporated a few prominent modifications that helped to establish corporate identity. Foremost was the distinctive rounded canopy. The majority of Clack stations built from the early 1930s into the 1950s included this stylistic touch. Another notable feature was the raised chevron insignia that was usually attached to the front and/or sides of company stations. Even after Husky Oil Company of Cody, Wyoming acquired all Clack assets in 1955, the chevrons remained on many stations well into the 1960s. The Saco station incorporates both of these features and is an outstanding example of 1930s vernacular gas station design.

The Clack station in Saco most likely was built in the early 1930s. It is known that the parcel of ground on which the station is located was leased to Clack Oil in 1931. Unfortunately, county records do not provide the actual construction date. Walter "Timber" Woods was the first operator, running the station until about 1940 when Bob Malmin acquired the business. Several other individuals ran the station before Bud Knudsen leased the property in December 1954. Mr. Knudsen operated the business until the summer of 1957 when he returned to the family ranch.

For several years the building sat vacant until the City of Saco leased the property in the early 1960s. Over the years the community has integrated the old station into the adjacent city park. A picnic shelter was attached to the east side of the office and the inside rest room repaired so it could be used as a rest stop for weary US 2 travellers. The building retains a high level of integrity, however, unfortunately over the years maintenance has been minimal and the property is now in serious need of repair.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Axline, Jon. Montana Cultural Resource Inventory 405 Montana Department of Highways, Helena (1993).
 Bayer, Linda. "Roadside Architecture," Historic Huntsville Quarterly 9:1,2 (1983).
 Clack, Louis. nephew of H. Earl Clack and former company employee, Personal communication (Havre, MT), July 1993.
 Henderson, Wayne. Guide to Gasoline Logos. self-published, Marshall, NC (1993).
 Jackle, John. "The American Gas Station, 1920-1970," Journal of American Culture Spring (1976).
 Knudsen, Bud. former operator of Clack station, Personal communication (Saco, MT), August 1993.
 Liebs, Chester. Main Street to Miracle Mile. Little, Brown & Company, Boston (1985).
 Vieyra, Daniel. Fill'er Up. Collier Books, New York (1978).

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A 13	326720	5369460

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): SW ¼, NW ¼, SW ¼ of Section 8, T31N, R34E

Verbal Boundary Description

Saco Townsite, Block 50, Lot 5.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the lot upon which the building is located.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Joseph M. Ashley, Associate Professor of Geography
 organization: Montana State University date: October 1993
 street & number: Dept of Earth Sciences telephone: 406/994-6904
 city or town: Bozeman state: MT zip code: 59717

Property Owner

name/title: City of Saco (building)
 street & number:
 city or town: Saco state: MT zip code: 59261

name/title: Burlington Northern Railroad (land) c/o Howard Kallio, Corporate Communication Coord.
 street & number: 999 3rd Avenue
 city or town: Seattle state: WA zip code: 98104