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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

7166

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Great Northern Railway Passenger and Freight Depot and Division Office

other name/site number: Whitefish Depot

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2. Location

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street & number: 500 Depot St.

not for publication: n/a

vicinity: n/a

city/town: Whitefish

state: Montana   code: MT   county: Flathead   code: 029   zip code: 59937

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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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title / State Historic Preservation Officer   Date   MAY 28, 2002

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

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4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper   Date of Action

Edson H. Beall   7/11/02

_V_   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): _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_1_	_1_	building(s)
_2_	_0_	sites
_0_	_0_	structures
_0_	_1_	objects
_3_	_2_	TOTAL

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions:

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Tudor Revival

Materials:

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: WOOD: weatherboard; STUCCO
roof: ASPHALT
other:

Narrative Description

The Great Northern Railway Passenger and Freight Depot and Division Office at Whitefish, Montana, is a two-story, frame Tudor Revival-style building completed in 1928. The depot is located fifty feet south of the main line of the railroad through Whitefish, and it is still serves as a passenger and freight railroad depot. Distinctive features of the building include large clipped-gable and steep gabled dormers, wide eaves, a flared roof, and decoratively carved brackets and rafter tails. The upper stories are sheathed in stucco and false timbers, and the lower in horizontal clapboard and vertical boards. East of the depot is a designed landscape that has remains of historic landscaping established in the late 1930s. West of the depot is a parking area that has been associated with the depot since it was built. The depot building has good exterior integrity. The main changes are replacement of the roof's cedar shingles with composition shingles, the addition of two fire escapes and an exterior stairway, replacement of a few doors, replacement of the original double-hung windows, and construction of a baggage building close to the southwest corner of the building. The setting, including the trackside location, the depot garden area, and the parking lot, retain good integrity, although the landscaping of the gardens today is mostly trees and shrubs rather than trees, shrubs, and annual and perennial flowers as it was during the historic period. The Stumptown Historical Society owns the building and leases most of it to Amtrak and to the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway.

Depot (contributing): The two-story side-gabled depot is of wood-frame construction and measures 36 feet by 150 feet. The clipped gable roof has wide, slightly flared eaves and is covered with green composition shingles (originally it was covered with cedar shingles). Snow stabilizers were installed on the roof in 1990. Decoratively carved single and double brackets at each corner and under the dormers, plus carved rafter tails, are distinctive features of the building. All the windows appear to be double-hung units with the same numbers of panes as the original windows, but they are actually sealed one-lite double-glazed windows with wood frames that replaced the original double-hung windows in the early 1990s. (In this nomination, the windows are described as the double-hung units they appear to be , although all are actually one-lite units). The building has several claddings. The cladding above the second-story windows is stucco with decorative half timbers, and there is a band containing quatrefoil designs above the windows. Below these windows is a belt of 8"-wide clapboard. The cladding around the first-floor windows is vertical boards. And below the first-floor windows, the siding is 12"-wide clapboard. The building rests on a concrete foundation and has a crawl space.

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Today, a heavy plank platform extends around the west, south, and east sides of the building. On the north side facing the tracks, the walkways are concrete covered with asphalt. From 1928 until some time between 1932 and 1957, the platform only extended along the east end of the south elevation and then farther east along the house track (the line running along the south side of the depot and connecting to the main line east and west of the depot). The "wing platform" to the east had five coal bins underneath it (they are no longer present). By 1957, it extended along the three sides of the building as it does today, and the south side along the tracks was 320 feet long and 12 feet wide. Today, a wooden stairway with a concrete base and metal rails leads to the platform from the concrete sidewalk in front of the depot. Three modern streetlights manufactured to old patterns light the sidewalk.

The north (front) elevation of the depot faces the railroad tracks. This elevation has two large clipped-gable wall dormers, a central steep-gabled wall dormer, and two small shed-roofed dormers. The central dormer has a decorative arched truss, and the upper two stories project from the main building surface. The pair of windows in this dormer are 4/4-lite. The clipped-gable dormers have triple 4/6-lite windows, and the shed dormers have 6-lite windows. Flower boxes are below the windows of the clipped-gable dormers and the third- and second-story windows of the central dormer. The second story has 6/6-lite windows except for those beneath the central dormer, which are 4/4-lite. The first story has 6/1-lite windows plus 6/1-lite windows below the central dormer and 6/6-lite with 6-lite transoms under the two clipped-gable dormers. Three 6-lite, 2-panel doors with 3-lite transoms on this side of the building are original, and they have diagonal boards in the panels. The baggage door closest to the east end is original. It has two 6-lite windows and four panels with diagonal boards. The identical door next to it, however, has been replaced by a double door with 9-lite, two-panel doors with diagonal boards and a 3-lite transom over each door. On the west end, a pair of 6/1 double-hung windows has been replaced by a baggage door similar to the one on the other end. It has one (instead of two) 6-lite window and 6 panels with diagonal boards.

On the east elevation, the third story has one window that appears to be 6/6-lite and another that has been replaced with a vent, with two small vents above these. The second story has four 6/6-lite windows and one window opening that has been filled with a 1-lite door leading to a fire escape installed in 1957. The first story has three pairs of 6/1-lite windows.

The south (rear) elevation has a large central clipped-gable wall dormer flanked by two small shed-roofed dormers on each side. These dormers are sided with clapboard, and they have three narrow windows each (the windows on the east end have been replaced with vents). The first- and second-story windows are 6/6- and 6/1-lite units. The central dormer has three windows that are 4/6-lite and a flower box with square rails below the central window. Two vents (not original) flank the central windows. The windows on the second story appear to be 6/6-lite double-hung units. In 1969, a metal exterior stairway was built from the second story to the platform. The original window was replaced with a 1-lite metal door. The first floor has 6/1-lite windows. There are three doors on the first floor. The one on the east enters the foyer with the elevator, with the museum to the right. The next door enters the Amtrak waiting room. The west door is a fold-up garage/baggage door with a wooden ramp to the platform. It has 6 lites over 6 panels, with diagonal boards. None of these doors are original, although their design is in keeping with the original doors on the building.

The third floor of the west elevation has one 6/6-lite window and three vents (the latter are not original). The metal fire escape installed in 1957 replaced the other window with a door with four lites. The second floor has five 6/6-lite windows. Just above the first-floor windows is large white lettering spelling out WHITEFISH. The first story has a 6-lite door with diagonal boards, surmounted by a 3-lite transom, on the south end, with a wooden step and metal rails.

The paint colors today are similar but not exactly the same as the original colors. Today, the depot is painted in two shades of tan (darker on the upper elevations) and two shades of brown. Originally, the building was tan and three shades of brown. The Stumptown Historical Society plans to match the original colors the next time the building is painted and stained.

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The interior of the depot has been extensively remodeled. Little evidence remains today of the original layout of the railroad offices and passenger and freight areas. The only original features include the commercial freight scale inside today's waiting room, some of the settees in the waiting room, the two ticket windows (not in their original locations), and two interior stairways.[1]

The platform along the main line track was originally concrete. It was blacktopped and timbered ca. 1957. In the 1960s, modern streetlights replaced the original ones that lit the walkway along the tracks on the north side of the depot. A modern flagpole stands tall in the lawn in front of the west end of the depot. The three rectangular lawn areas between the tracks and the depot building today have circular flower beds, but during the historic period these were simply lawns. Metal rails help keep people off the lawns.

Parking lot (contributing): The gravel parking lot extends 260' from the west edge of the depot and from Railway Street north to the walkway along the main line. An old ice wagon and a baggage wagon are stored outside on the eastern extension of the plank platform. A chain-link fence separates the parking lot on the west from the walkway along the tracks. The parking lot and the two historic objects are not included in the count of contributing/non-contributing features at the site. A small storage building is located east of the gardens. It was built in the early 1990s to store artifacts for the Stumptown Historical Society. This building is not included within the boundaries of this nomination.

Engine (non-contributing): The engine on display in the parking lot is one of only seven that were made by General Motors for the Great Northern Railway. The 1942 diesel-electric engine is known as an NW3. This particular engine was used for passenger trains in Minnesota's Red River Valley and on the main line to St. Paul. Its steam boiler was fired to heat passenger cars. In the 1960s, the Great Northern Railway sold it to the Anaconda Aluminum Company in Columbia Falls, where it was used for switching railcars of raw materials for the smelter. In the late 1980s, that company gave the engine to Stumptown Historical Society. The Burlington Northern hauled it to the Whitefish roundhouse and supplied the paint and blueprints so the Stumptown Historical Society could sandblast and repaint the engine in its original colors. In 1990, the engine was moved to its current location. An interpretive plaque is mounted on the side of the engine.

Baggage building (non-contributing): The baggage building was built in approximately 1997. It is located close to the southwest corner of the depot. Six of the sides of the octagonal building are 12 feet long, and the two long sides (running north-south) are 44 feet long. The building has composition shingle roofing, and it is supported by large metal columns. The garage doors on each elevation were designed to be similar to those on the depot building. Each has 6 lites and 6 panels with diagonal boards. The plank platform has been extended several feet to the south and west to reach the baggage room, and the concrete walkway has been extended on the north.

Depot garden (contributing): The depot's garden area extends approximately 470' from the east edge of the platform along the east side of the depot, and it is approximately 35' wide. It is today surrounded on the east and south sides by a two-rail cedar fence and on the west side by a one-rail metal pipe fence. Blue spruce and clumps of birch trees line three sides of the garden area (except for the north side adjacent to the walk along the tracks), and there is a large central blue spruce. A local garden club established plantings of some forty shrubs in the garden area beginning in 1990, plus some perennial flowers. These volunteers also hang flower pots along the depot in the summer and maintain circular flower beds in the three lawn areas in front of the depot building.[2] A few wooden picnic tables and benches and one stone bench are arranged in the garden area. Two old baggage wagons and an old hose wagon from the fire department are at the east end of the garden area (these are not included in the count of contributing/non-contributing features).

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[1] Frank Gregg, personal communication to Kathryn L. McKay, 7 Feb. 2001.
[2] Flossie Fletcher, personal communication to Kathryn L. McKay, 15 Feb. 2001.

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Integrity: The Great Northern Railway Passenger and Freight Depot and Division Office and its surrounding grounds retain a high degree of exterior integrity. While replacement windows and a few modern doors have been installed, they are in keeping with the style and divided-lite patterns of the originals. The interior of the building retains little integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. A few architectural and mechanical details, such as the freight scale, ticket windows, and two interior stairways, remain in place. Despite these changes, overall the property retains its integrity of setting, location, association, feeling, design, workmanship, materials sufficient to convey its significance.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C   Areas of Significance: TRANSPORTATION, ARCHITECTURE

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):   Period(s) of Significance: 1928-1952

Significant Person(s): N/A   Significant Dates: 1928

Cultural Affiliation: N/A   Architect/Builder: McMahon, Thomas D'Arcy

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Great Northern Passenger and Freight Depot and Division Office is significant under Criteria A and C. The period of significance is 1928 (the year of construction) until 1952 (fifty years ago). During this period, the depot served as the Great Northern Railway division offices and as the hub for passenger and freight transportation by rail. The depot building and its grounds were and still are an important local symbol of the railroad's presence and importance to the community, as well as of the railroad's faith in the town of Whitefish itself. The depot is significant under Criterion A for its important role in passenger and freight transportation in northwestern Montana. The depot is also significant under Criterion C for its distinctive architectural design. The Tudor-style building reflects a popular architectural style of the 1920s, and architectural details such as carved brackets link it with the Great Northern's chalets and hotels in nearby Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park, some of them designed by the same architect as the Whitefish depot. The building has good exterior integrity. The setting of the depot during the historic period (included within the property's boundaries for this nomination) included the landscaped area east of the depot and the parking lot west of the depot..

Criterion A: The first settlers in the area of today's Whitefish lived near the outlet of Whitefish Lake rather than on today's townsite. By 1892, several dozen people lived in that area. In 1891, the Great Northern Railway line crossed Marias Pass at the Continental Divide and construction crews began working their way west. They went through Columbia Falls and on southwest to the new town of Kalispell, founded as the railroad's division point. From there, the railroad continued west to Jennings and Libby. James J. Hill, president of the Great Northern, soon decided to reroute the line west of Columbia Falls. Track was laid from Columbia Falls to Whitefish (8.5 miles) in 1903, and in 1904 another 60.5 miles were laid from Whitefish to Rexford, where the Great Northern already had a spur line. This route was 17 miles longer than the original route through Kalispell, but the maximum grade and maximum curvature were much improved. Because of this rerouting, the town of Whitefish was founded in 1903 at a forested area next to the tracks. Whitefish replaced Kalispell as the official division point for the Kalispell Division, which extended from Cut Bank on the east to Troy on the west, in October 1904. As the division point, Whitefish housed the Great Northern's repair shops and administrative offices. In 1925, E. F. Flynn of Great Northern headquarters said, "Whitefish is the most distinctively railroad town on the whole Great Northern system...a larger percentage of the population are employees."[3] Great Northern engineers, firemen, and others were required to live in Whitefish.[4]

The Great Northern Railway began planning for construction of a new depot and division office in Whitefish in 1923 because the existing buildings were crowded and in poor condition and because the division superintendent's employees were scattered in several buildings. The project was delayed until 1927, however, because of a debate over plans for a viaduct or underpass crossing of the railroad line (the viaduct, located west of the depot, was not actually built until 1935). The railroad issued an Approval for Expenditure for a two-story frame building on May 4, 1927, to cost an estimated $56,675.[5]

The general contractor for the project was the W. T. Butler Company of Seattle, and the on-site superintendent was George Sohrer. Local laborers were hired for 50 cents an hour. The Great Northern supplied the sand, gravel, and concrete for the project. Painting contractor J. S. Smith of Minneapolis painted the new building, and Three Forks Portland Cement Company of Butte plastered the depot. As much of the lumber as possible came from the Somers Lumber Company mill at the head of Flathead Lake. The pea gravel

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[3] Quoted in Betty Schafer & Mable Engelter, *Stump Town to Ski Town: The Story of Whitefish, Montana* (Whitefish, Mont.: Whitefish Library Association, 1973), 133.

[4] Ibid., 2, 10, 19-21, 23, 25, 27.

[5] "Great Northern May Construct New Depot Here," *Whitefish Pilot,* 13 May 1927: 1; Martin Evoy, III, letter to Max E. Ulver, 8 Jan. 2000 1; Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town,* 132.

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for the concrete floors of the depot came from a quarry near Spokane.[6]

The Butler Company may not have made much profit on the Whitefish depot job. In December 1927, George Sohrer requested passes for his crew to return to Seattle, complaining that he had been holding his men on site waiting for the plumbers and steamfitters to do their work before he could put in the concrete floors. He wrote, "Personally I'm pretty well disgusted with the way I've been held up, and it don't take much overhead to eat the profits on a job taken as close as this one was."[7]

As part of the depot project, the original house track along the south side of the depot was torn up and relocated to be 100 feet south of the main line. The removal of the yard office and switch shanty allowed the track connecting the depot and the roundhouse to be almost straight. Private cars and Pullmans were parked between the roundhouse lead and Central Avenue. A freight platform was built parallel to the house track that allowed for easier transfer and consolidation of freight. This platform originally did not extend all the way to the west elevation as it does today; this may be because of Division Superintendent LaBertew's concerns that freight cars would block light from the waiting room and offices on that end of the building. The platform was extended all the way along the south elevation some time between 1932 and 1957.[8]

The depot was heated by steam brought from the roundhouse to the west. The steam was carried by an overhead steam line mounted on poles that went underground at Central Avenue. The overhead line also heated passenger equipment "spotted" along the house track west of the depot. This steam line was replaced ca. 1957 by a boiler house built on the corner southeast of the depot (this no longer exists). From approximately 1967 until 1990, a large boiler in the roundhouse fed steam to an underground steam line that heated the depot. Today, a gas furnace on the third floor heats the building.[9]

The new depot was built in essentially the same location as the original one, although it was farther from the tracks. During construction, the old depot was moved six feet north (closer to the tracks) to handle continuing passenger and freight traffic. After the new depot was completed, the old depot was moved east along the tracks where, for about three years, Whitefish café owner and farmer W. W. Hori used the building as a potato warehouse (in fact, the Great Northern bought much of his produce for its dining car service). The two-story lunchroom was demolished when the new depot was built.[10]

Structures that had to be moved or removed for the 1927 construction project included the yard office west of the depot (12' x 38' and 9' x 14'); the two-story lunchroom (22' x 65'); trainmen's store house (8' x 18'); car inspectors' house (12' x 14'); coal bin (12' x 16'); a flagpole; house track; original cinder and plank depot platform; oil house; and depot (32' x 157').[11]

Other railroad-related structures along the tracks included the roundhouse (built 1904 and expanded several times), turntable, boiler shops, car shops, machine shops, ice houses, and coal chute. Most Great Northern employees roomed in Whitefish or owned their own residence. The only employee dormitories were for Japanese workers, and these dorms were located in at least two locations over the years. The division superintendent lived in a residence in Whitefish. None of these buildings and structures except the roundhouse and turntables still exist; the roundhouse today has only six stalls (it once had thirty-seven stalls).

In the end, the construction of the Whitefish depot and division offices exceeded the estimated costs by $24,352. According to the Great Northern Railway, the reasons were as follows: the authorization for expenditure was prepared before detailed plans and estimates had been worked out; the proposed separate heating system in the basement was replaced with a steam pipe from the roundhouse; the relocation of the house track and its switch was not included in the estimate; electric street lights for the platform

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[6] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 4-7, 9, 15; "Work On Depot Started Monday," *Whitefish Pilot,* 11 Oct. 1927.
[7] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 9.
[8] Ibid., 2-3, 8.
[9] Ibid., 3, 8-9; Gregg, personal communication.
[10] Gregg, personal communication; Evoy, letter to Ulver, 4; Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town,* 50.
[11] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 14-15.

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were not included in the estimate; temporary platforms and walks had to be built; a plank platform was built between the main track and track No. 1; coal bins were installed under the platform on the south side of the depot; treated ties and heavy tie plates were placed on the main line track between the platforms; and the old depot had to be moved twice.[12]

When the depot was completed in 1928, the first floor housed the yard office, freight and baggage rooms, warm room, ticket office, general waiting room, telegraph office, men's smoking room, and ladies' rest room. The second floor housed the Division Superintendent's staff and department heads and their staff. These included the offices of the Master Mechanic, Train Master, Claim Agent, Special Agent, Assistant Engineer, Master Carpenter, Roadmaster, Chief Clerk, and Chief Dispatcher. The attic housed a file room and a conference room.[13] In the late 1920s, passenger trains often had as many as seventeen passengers cars. These trains stopped for ten minutes in Whitefish. Most passengers got off the train to walk around or to get food.[14]

In the 1940s, many railroad employees worked in the depot. They included the division superintendent, trainmaster, roadmaster, road foreman, forty-eight in the yard office, twelve dispatchers, three telegraphers, three janitors, five special agents, three PBX (telephone switchboard) operators, five or six secretaries, approximately twenty-five clerks, the ticket office head agent plus four or five others in the ticket office, and four or five baggage men.[15]

The grounds of Great Northern Railway depots across the country ranged from lawns to designed gardens. Although plans called for flower gardens in the area north of the Whitefish depot, this evidently did not happen immediately. For the first ten years after the new depot in Whitefish was built, 308 square yards of lawn and perhaps some bushes (seen in a historic photograph along the freight platform) comprised the landscaping. This changed in 1937 or 1938, when the railroad hired section foreman Paul Gallo to establish and maintain gardens along the platform east of the depot and also to maintain the landscaping at the Division Superintendent's house. Great Northern's supervisor of parks, Andy DeRooy, directed the project. Gallo continued to work on the railroad during the winter season.[16]

The garden area extends 467 feet east from the end of the platform on the east side of the depot. The planted area/lawn is about 85 feet north to south. The plantings featured birch trees, Koster's blue spruce imported from Holland, and juniper bushes. The flowers included lupine, viola, delphinium, valeriana, pansies, begonias, marigolds, honeysuckle bushes, snapdragons, Canterbury bells, rose bushes, dahlias, zinnias, asters, petunias phlox, sweet William, and heliotrope. The Russell variety of lupine and the Jersey Gem viola were the primary flowers in 1950. Two sixteen-foot flower beds flanked the spruce trees, and curved flower beds were located at each end of the park. One year Gallo spelled out "Whitefish" in blue lobelia flowers against a white background. For a time, life-size animal cutouts of whitetail deer, mountain goat, mountain sheep, bears, and reindeer graced the gardens. Many of the plants were raised in Whitefish in starting beds, but the rest were shipped in from the Great Northern nursery at Monroe, Washington. A large tree in the center of the garden was decorated for Christmas. A picket fence surrounded the gardens.[17]

After Paul Gallo retired, the gardens were maintained until about 1970 by his assistant George Klem and in following years by George Sonada, Harold Murphy, and Jim Kajiwara. By 1990, the gardens had reverted back to lawn. Today, the gardens east of the depot and flower boxes on the building itself are maintained by the Dirty Hands Gardening Club. They do not have enough workers to re-establish the gardens, now known as the Gallo Gardens, to their former glory, but they have planted many varieties of shrubs, a few trees, and have established a few annual and perennial flower beds. The birch trees, blue spruce trees, a rose bush, and a peony plant remain from the plantings of the period of significance.[18]

[12] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 15.
[13] "Approved Plans," *Whitefish Pilot,* 1; Evoy, letter to Ulver, 3-4.
[14] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 1, 3.
[15] Gregg, personal communication.
[16] Evoy, letter to Ulver, 15; "Approved Plans," *Whitefish Pilot,* 1; Gregg, personal communication; "GN Station Landscaping," *The Great Northern Goat* (Sept. 1950); "GN's Floral Park Beauty Seldom Seen by Residents," *Whitefish Pilot,* ca. 1955.
[17] "GN Station Landscaping," *The Great Northern Goat,* Sept. 1950; Stumptown Historical Society, "Whitefish Railroad Depot: Gallo Gardens," 2000; "GN's Floral Park Beauty," *Whitefish Pilot.*
[18] Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town,* 192; Flossie Fletcher, personal communication.

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Several hundred Whitefish women operated a Servicemen's Canteen next to the depot between 1943 and early 1946. They moved a stand from the beach on Whitefish Lake to the edge of the railroad platform on the west side of Central Avenue. They served passengers on special troop trains and on the four regular trains each day, selling sandwiches, cookies, coffee, soda, and other items to servicemen at nominal prices and giving away donated items. Eventually the Great Northern furnished heating, light, ice, and water to the stand. The stand no longer exists.[19]

In the late 1940s, Whitefish employment on the Great Northern declined substantially because of the change from steam to diesel (or diesel electric) locomotives. The steam locomotives had been maintained at the Whitefish roundhouse, but with the switch to diesel, a new diesel maintenance shop was built at Havre. The last steam engine ran on the system in 1957.[20]

In the 1950s, freight began to be carried increasingly in trucks and trailers rather than rail cars. As a result, the west end of the house track at the Whitefish depot was removed in the 1950s. The east end remained, with a ramp on the end. Trucks were able to back trailers onto flatcars. All of the house track close to the depot was gone by the late 1960s. By the 1970s, most freight came to the Flathead Valley by truck rather than by rail.[21]

For many years, Whitefish was within the Kalispell Division of the Great Northern, which stretched from just east of Havre, Montana, to Fort George Wright west of Spokane. Whitefish is now within the Washington Division. This extends from the Columbia Falls area on the east to the Wenatchee area on the west. Whitefish lost its status as division point to Spokane in 1955, but train and engine crews still changed in Whitefish on all through freight and passenger trains.[22]

The main line of the Great Northern Railway through northwestern Montana was relocated again in 1970 because of the building of Libby Dam on the Kootenai River, which flooded some fifty miles of track between Whitefish and Libby. The line between Eureka and Jennings was taken out of service, and the seven-mile Flathead Tunnel was constructed on the new line.[23]

In 1970, Burlington Northern was created by a merger of the Great Northern; Northern Pacific; Spokane, Portland, and Seattle; and Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, with headquarters remaining in St. Paul. Amtrak took over most intercity passenger operations, including those along the Burlington Northern line across Montana, in 1971.[24] In 1995, after another merger, the railroad became known as the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway. Today, two passenger trains and about thirty-five freight trains pass through Whitefish each day. In the year 2000, over 57,000 passengers boarded and deboarded at the Whitefish station, comprising 42 percent of all of Amtrak's activity in Montana.[25]

The Stumptown Historical Society, a Whitefish organization, bought the depot building in March 1990 from Burlington Northern and signed a long-term lease on the site, including the parking lot to the west and the gardens to the east. The historical society then embarked on an extensive renovation project. The work included replacing all the original double-hung windows with double-glazed one-lite windows and installing an elevator, heating system, and fire sprinklers. Today, Amtrak, Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railroad, and a few businesses rent space in the depot from the historical society. The historical society's museum opened on the east end of the first floor in 1992, and the historical society has office space on the third floor.

[19] Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town*, 153-55.
[20] Ibid., 134-135, 190-191.
[21] Gregg, personal communication.
[22] Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town*, 190.
[23] Hidy, *Great Northern Railway*, 272.
[24] Schafer & Engelter, *Stump Town*, 191.
[25] Gregg, personal communication; "Rail Travel Continues to Grow in Montana," *Daily Inter Lake*, 14 Feb. 2001.

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Criterion C: Thomas D'Arcy McMahon designed the depot. McMahon was from Ontario, and he came to the United States in 1888 at the age of ten. McMahon began work for the Great Northern Railway's Engineering Department in St. Paul in 1905 as a Draftsman, and the following year he became Chief Draftsman. In 1914, he was promoted to Architect, and he remained in this position until the late 1940s. As described in the *Whitefish Pilot,* McMahon designed the depot to be "in the English style with high pointed roof and timbered gables."[26] According to a Whitefish newspaper article of September 1927, the new depot's design was different from any then on the Great Northern system.[27]

The depot has many characteristic features of the Tudor style of architecture. This style was very popular in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Identifying features include the stucco and decorative half-timbering above clapboard, and the multiple groups of tall, narrow windows with multi-pane glazing. Features that associate the building with the "rustic" chalets and hotels of Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park include the clipped gable roof, the decoratively carved brackets and rafter tails, the balconies, and possibly the arched truss in the front central gable. The quatrefoil design in the half timbering is seen on a number of Tudor-style buildings in the Flathead Valley, notably the 1925 Tudor-style First Presbyterian Church in Kalispell (540 Main Street) designed by Fred Brinkman.

The U.S. Congress established Glacier National Park in 1910. The Great Northern Railway Company almost immediately adopted a new advertising theme that emphasized Glacier and its attractions. The railroad built two large hotels and nine chalets between 1911 and 1917, and these were managed and operated by a subsidiary of the railroad. These hotels and chalets were designed to remind visitors of Swiss chalets, and they often were built of stone on the ground floor and wood frame above and had alpine detailing on the balconies and shutters. Thomas McMahon designed the two large hotels in the park, Many Glacier and Glacier Park hotels. The Many Glacier Hotel has decoratively carved brackets similar to those on the Whitefish depot. Thomas McMahon also designed Waterton's Prince of Wales hotel (although there were many subsequent work-order changes that changed it from a horizontal four-story structure to a seven-story European chalet with steep gabled roofs), which was completed in July 1927. This hotel has carved brackets and ribbons of windows, like the Whitefish depot. The Izaak Walton Inn in Essex, Montana, another hotel just outside of Glacier National Park on the Great Northern line that was run by a subsidiary of the railroad, was built in 1939. It has clapboard siding on the first floor, stucco with half timbering on the next two floors, decoratively carved brackets, exposed rafter tails, and a clipped gable roof with shed and small gable dormers.[28] M. C. LaBertew, Division Superintendent, made extensive comments on the plans for the depot prepared by McMahon. The plans were modified to address many of his and other local officials' comments, delaying construction for two months.[29]

[26] "Old Site To Be Used For Depot Building," *Whitefish Pilot,* 12 Aug. 1927.

[27] Tracey Baker, Minnesota Historical Society, letter to Paul T. Snyder, Stumptown Historical Society, 9 Sept. 2000; "Will Move Depot Eight Feet For Temporary Use," *Whitefish Pilot,* 6 Sept. 1927: 1.

[28] Ralph W. Hidy, et al., *The Great Northern Railway: A History* (Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press, 1988), 125; Bridget Moylan, *Glacier's Grandest: A Pictorial History of the Hotels and Chalets of Glacier National Park* (Missoula, Mont.: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1994) 30, 72; MacDonald, *Waterton Country,* 83.

[29] "Approved Plans for Depot-Office Building," *Whitefish Pilot,* 2 Sept. 1927: 1.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

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:
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
_X_ Other – Specify Repository: Stumptown Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approximately 2.2 acres

UTM References: Zone: 11 **Easting:** 697235   **Northing:** 5365476

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): part of tract 3A, N2 NE4 Sec. 36, T31N R22W

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northwest corner of Spokane Avenue and Railway Street in Whitefish, Montana, go approximately 470 feet east to the end of the fence line around the garden area east of the depot. Go north approximately 106 feet to the main line of the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe Railway. Go west approximately 890 feet along the railroad tracks to the west end of the parking lot west of the depot. Go south approximately 106 feet to the north side of Railway Street. Go east approximately 420 feet to point of origin.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the depot building plus the gardens and parking lot that have historically been associated with the depot.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathryn L. McKay, Historian
organization: Tracks of the Past   date: Feb. 16, 2001
street & number: 491 Eckelberry Dr.   telephone: (406) 892-1586
city or town: Columbia Falls   state: MT   zip code: 59912

Property Owner

name/title: Stumptown Historical Society
street & number: 500 Depot St.   telephone: (406) 862-0067
city or town: Whitefish   state: MT   zip code: 59937

name/title: Director of Administration, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad
street & number: 4510 E. Wisconsin   telephone: 800-795-2673
city or town: Spokane   state: WA   zip code: 99212

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"Work In New House Track About Finished." *Whitefish Pilot,* 30 March 1928.

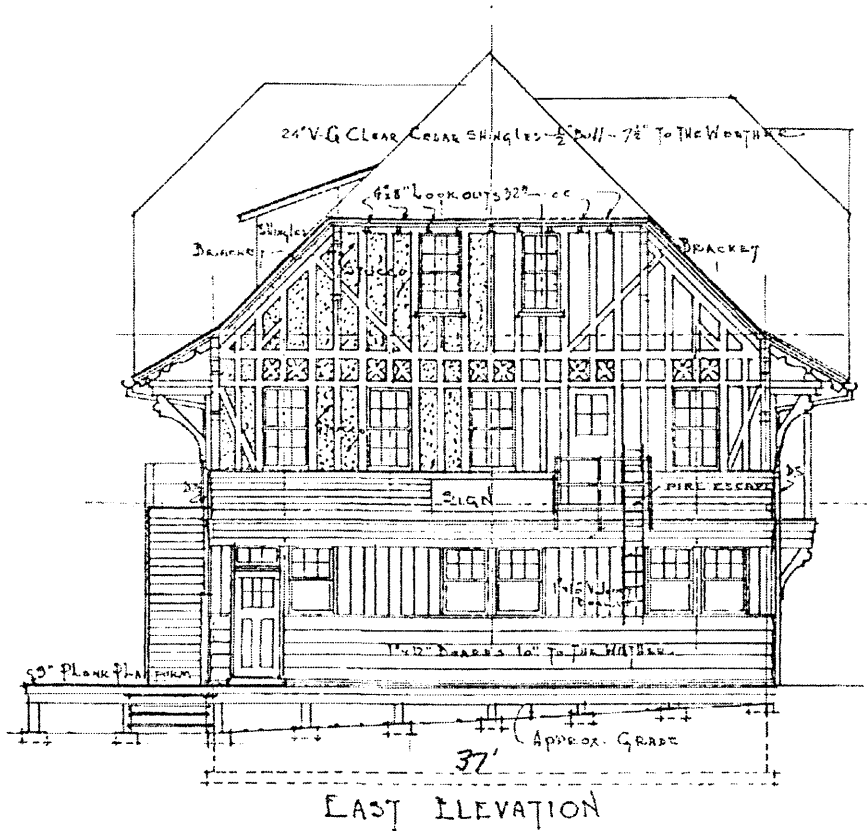"Work On Depot Started Monday." *Whitefish Pilot,* 11 Oct. 1927.

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OFFICE OF CHIEF ENGINEER. ST. PAUL. MINN. SEPT. 1927

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY

WHITEFISH, MONT.

PASS. & FRT. DEPOT
AND DIVISION OFFICE.

ELEV.DETAILS

ARCHITECT

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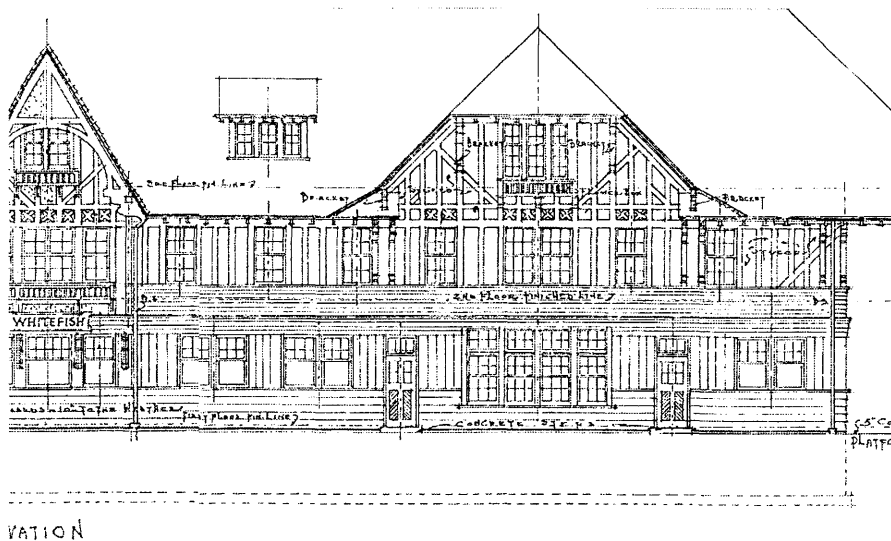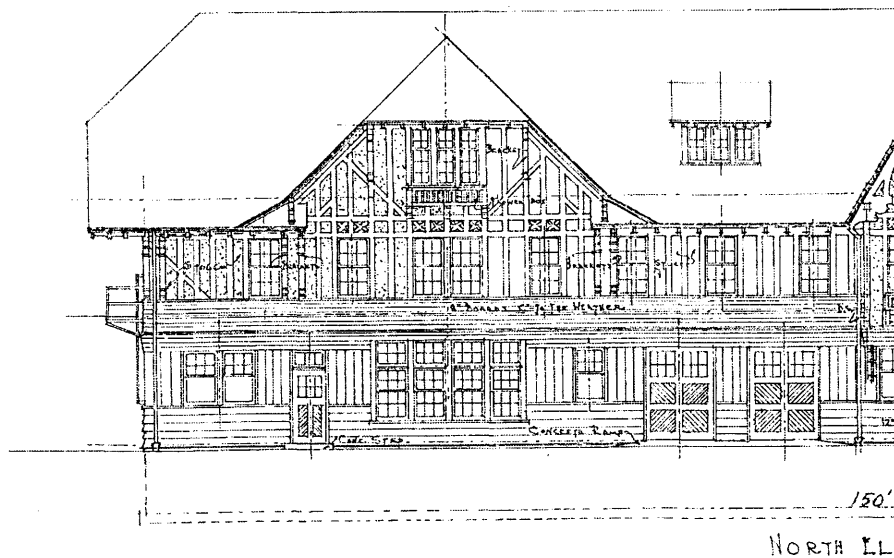Reproduction of McMahon's original drawings, 1928.

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Reproduction of McMahon's original drawings, south elevation detail, 1928.

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Reproduction of McMahon's original drawings, north elevation, 1928.

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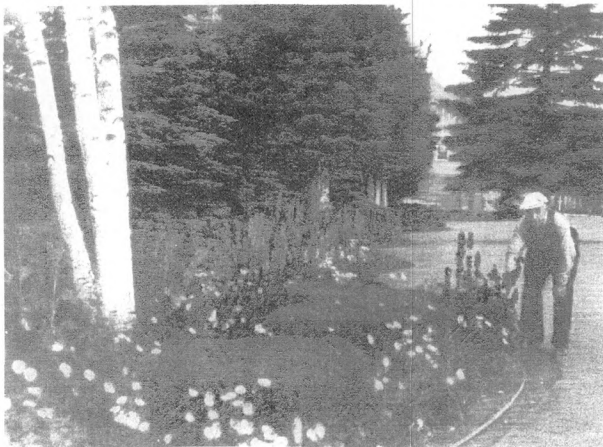CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Whitefish Depot, c. 1931, view to the southwest.

Paul Gallo working in the depot garden, no date.

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Great Northern Depot, Whitefish, Montana

Depot in 1950, view to the southeast.
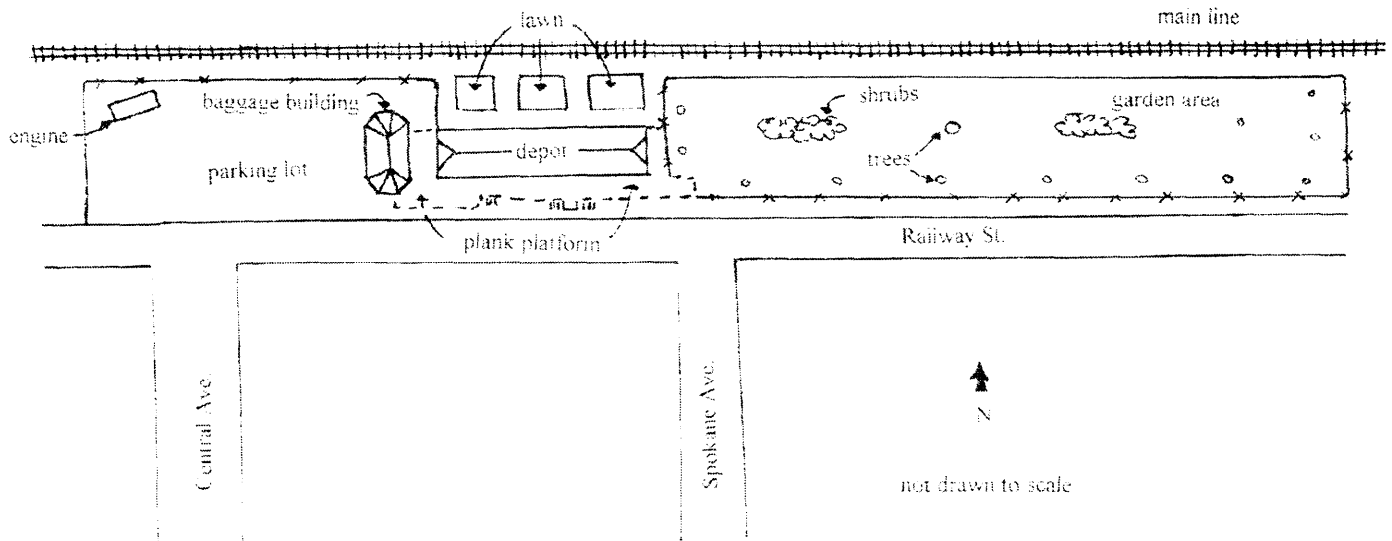
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Great Northern Railway Passenger and Freight Depot and Divison Office

Site Map

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