

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED AUG 2 1976
DATE ENTERED SEP 1 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME
HISTORIC ****** Missoula County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 220 West Broadway
CITY, TOWN Missoula VICINITY OF #1
STATE Montana CODE 30 COUNTY Missoula CODE 063

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME County of Missoula
STREET & NUMBER 220 West Broadway
CITY, TOWN Missoula VICINITY OF STATE Montana

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Clerk & Recorder's Office, Missoula County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER 220 West Broadway
CITY, TOWN Missoula STATE Montana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE 1973 Survey of Historic Architecture in Montana, John N. DeHaas, Jr.
DATE November 19, 1973 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Recreation & Parks Div., Dept. of Fish & Game, 1420 E. 6th Av.
CITY, TOWN Helena STATE Montana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Missoula County Courthouse occupies a full tree-perimetered city block on a busy thoroughfare. Expressive of the stability of local government, the present building was erected in 1908-10 on the site of the old county courthouse. The building was designed by A. J. Gibson, architect of Missoula. The neo-classical sandstone structure is two stories on elevated basement. The exterior walls are of native sandstone, and the base and piers are heavily rusticated and three feet thick.

The main or south facade differs from the other facades by having a portico of a pediment supported by paired Ionic columns. These columns are giant order and flank the main entry. Entry is gained by a short flight of native granite steps. The other facades have slightly projecting pediments supported by rusticated piers and single columns. The east and west facades have concrete balconies, enhanced by galvanized iron grills at the main floor, below which are doors to the elevated basement. These doors were originally oak with beveled glass. A circular window framed by ornate mouldings is centered in each of the four tympana. The roof cornice and the frames of the pediments are of galvanized iron. The hip roof and the pediments are covered with slate shingles.

Centrally located above the internal axes of the building is an internal dome, crowned externally by a clock tower with clocks on all four sides. The dome of the clock tower is reinforced concrete covered by galvanized iron panels. Within the clock tower is a large bell which weighs two tons. Above the tower dome is a small lantern structure.

The original paired copper doors of the main entry had black iron studs and large beveled glass lights, but they have been replaced by contemporary glass doors. Above the doors is a small triangular pediment supported by piers which in turn are flanked by vertical panels of beveled glass in copper frames. Above the pediment is a semi-circular arched opening with an S-scroll keystone. Within this opening is a large plate glass window framed by an arched panel of glass in copper frames. The north entry is similar to the south entry, but not identical.

Having passed through the main entry, a wide flight of stairs of marble leads to the main or first floor. The stairs have curved cast iron stringers, wrought iron balustrade and grill, and wood handrails. On either side of these stairs a short flight of five risers leads downward to the basement offices. On the main floor a rotunda extends upward through the second floor and culminates in the ornately decorated dome. The upper part of the dome has glass panels with electric lights behind them. The plastered columns that support the rotunda are Doric on the basement level, Ionic on the main floor, and Corinthian on the second floor, the judicial level of the building. Capitals and cornice within the rotunda are also cast plaster.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2 of 2

The interior walls are basically plaster over structural clay tile, and the walls are still painted the original colors. There is a three foot marble wainscot in the entry and rotunda. Throughout the interior one can observe the subtle decorative classical motifs, such as the egg and dart moulding, the Greek fret and acanthus leaf, employed to accent the interior surface plains. With the exception of the main staircase, the floors are ceramic tile. Especially noteworthy are the eight murals mounted on the walls of the south entry. They were executed by the famed western artist, Edgar S. Paxson.

Besides the altered doors, modifications to the courthouse have been minor. Internal wiring and plumbing are basically intact, evident in the old plumbing fixtures. Although many lighting fixtures are still in use today, modern fluorescent fixtures have been installed to boost the light level in various areas. The largest alteration to the site has been the 1966 addition on the north of a new adjoining office building, which is slightly larger in volume. It is a reinforced concrete structure with pre-cast concrete panel facade.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1908-1910

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Williams & Oliver Co./ A.J. Gibson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Missoula County Courthouse is a prominent architectural monument to local government in one of the oldest political subdivisions in the state of Montana. Furthermore, it contains eight murals by Edgar S. Paxson, Missoula artist famed for his western paintings.

Missoula County was first designated in 1860 as all of Washington Territory between 115' longitude and the main ridge of the Rocky Mountains. The county seat was placed at Hell's Gate. The county became part of Idaho Territory in 1863 and Montana Territory in 1864, and in 1866 a newly elected county government moved the county seat four miles east to the new town of Missoula. Courthouse quarters were rented until 1870 when the original courthouse was built on the same site as the current courthouse. Missoula county was one of nine original counties of Montana Territory and it has since been subdivided to form Flathead, Ravalli, Sanders and Mineral Counties, and parts of Lake and Granite Counties. In addition, Missoula County annexed portions of Powell and Granite Counties, with final boundary shifts occurring in 1943.

Most of the population of the county today is centered around the city of Missoula. Missoula originated in 1865 when Higgins and Warden moved their stores from Hell's Gate four miles east to the mouth of Hell Gate Pass. They also built a saw mill and grist mill. A second store was established in 1966 by Bonner and Welsh, the county commissioners moved the county seat in that year and the town was begun. Farming, ranching and lumbering have provided Missoula's economic base.

By 1907, the old Missoula County Courthouse had become too small. A bond issue for \$175,000 was passed and A. J. Gibson, a local architect, was hired to design the new building. Williams and Oliver Company of Spokane, Washington, received the contract to build it. The cornerstone was laid in 1908 and the building was completed in 1910.

Edgar Paxson was commissioned to paint the eight murals for the south entrance to the courthouse for a fee of \$1,000. The murals depict Native Americans and early white men and together they highlight the early history of the Missoula County area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lenora Koelbel, Missoula the Way it Was, Gateway Printing & Litho, Missoula, Montana 1972
Inventory of the County Archives of Montana, The Historical Record Record Survey, Missoula County, 1938

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.02 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	2	2	71	7	6	0
ZONE		EASTING			NORTHING	

5	1	95	2	3	0	
ZONE		EASTING			NORTHING	

B

ZONE		EASTING			NORTHING	

ZONE		EASTING			NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Block 19, Higgins Additon, Missoula, Missoula County, Montana.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE John N. DeHaas, Jr., Architect, Fredric L Quie, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Recreation and Parks Division
Department of Fish and Game

DATE June 28, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 1420 E. 6th Avenue

TELEPHONE (406) 449-3750

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

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

Paul Holliday

TITLE Montana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE July 23, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William M. ...

DATE 9/1/76

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: *Charles ...*

DATE 8-27-76

Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER