

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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

Masonic Temple

AND/OR COMMON

Masonic Temple (Lewistown Lodge No. 37 A.F. & A.M.)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

322 West Broadway Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lewistown

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#2

STATE

Montana

VICINITY OF

CODE

30

COUNTY

Fergus

CODE

027

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

X COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

XX YES: RESTRICTED

X GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

X OTHER: Fraternal

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Lewistown Lodge No. 37 A.F. & A.M. Incorporated August 22, 1908

STREET & NUMBER

322 W. Broadway Street

CITY, TOWN

Lewistown

STATE

Montana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Fergus County Courthouse

Clerk & Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

712 W. Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Lewistown

STATE

Montana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED  
Very Little

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Overlooking Lewistown's Central Business District, the detached three-story (and basement) Masonic Temple Building stands alone at the corner of Fourth Avenue North and West Broadway Street. Facing the Central Business District from the North it is flanked by the United States Post Office Building across a lot to the east and the Northwestern Bank of Lewistown, across Fourth Avenue North to the West. This three-story Stone Building was built in 1908 in accordance with Masonic tradition and incorporating most of the symbolism of the orders which were to occupy the building.

In form, the fraternal building is a rectangular block that occupies most of its 90' x 50' lot. The footings are concrete poured on "cement gravel", which was the natural sub-surface soil at this site. Rising from the cement gravel base (which is as solid as if it were concrete) is the concrete foundation. Two carloads of cement were ordered on June 29, 1908 for the foundation. Finish work and plastering of the basement took place on August 12, 1909. The basement was later rented out as a cafe.

Light gray rock faced sandstone (quarried locally) is the predominant material of the elevations above grade. The first floor level (along with the basement) was intended to serve commercial enterprises that would ultimately support the operating costs of the fraternal organizations housed above. This arrangement still occurs. Originally (July 26, 1909) the first floor was let out to Cook-Reynolds Land and Loans for \$1,080 per year, and a coal, gas and light company; at least three concerns rent the same first floor space. The functional division between commercial units and the Masonic Lodge is expressed in the design of the structure which reads as a foundation level (commercial) and a two story superstructure (Lodge). Large plate glass windows generally define the first floor spaces then as now. A metallic grill in a cross-star pattern formed a type of freeze above all the store's display windows. This grillwork over the first floor display windows facing Broadway and the 4th Ave side has been covered with buff colored aluminum siding but still exists beneath the siding. The most striking feature at the first floor level is a free standing entranceway expressed as a Roman arch order; two square columnar shafts with chamfered edges are surmounted by Corinthian capitols and support a smooth ashlar arch. The arch is centered by a prominent bracketed keystone inscribed with the Masonic emblem. Lending dramatic effect to the centered (and more symbolic) entrance is the recessed backdrop with splayed sides formed by the display windows. This recessed area, while stylistically a carry over of the picturesque Queen Anne, serves the practical need of added circulation for an area that had to provide access to three separate spaces.

The Masonic Temple space of the upper two floors reads as a separate structure resting on the foundation of the commercial facilities below. The two story "colossal" ionic pilasters unite the function of the upper stories and are set off by the change of texture to smooth ashlar shafts. The second floor was designed to accomodate club rooms, kitchen, and dining room areas. It even included a club room known as the "Judith Club". Here soft drinks were served and card tables and pool tables were available to the members. The third floor (in true masonic tradition) was devoted to lodge rooms with attending preparation and storage rooms. The windows in the third story reflect the hierarchy of this special lodge room and are arched with keystones gracing the tops of each window. On the West Elevation, location of the main lodge room, the windows were of pattern glass with the top half-circle fabricated of stained glass

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showing symbolism of the various orders using the room, Blue Lodge, Royal Arch, Council, Commandry, and Eastern Star lodges; clear one-over-one sash windows are now present. The lodge room had a high vaulted ceiling with ornate painted molding along the sides and ends of the room. The wainscoting along the walls of the lodge room, the plastered beamed ceiling and heavy hardwood furniture spoke to the medieval qualities of the building, while "Wrenish columns supporting heavy projecting cornices and plastered supporting brackets addressed the classical identity of this transitional Romanesque classical revival building style. Two large 1909 "cluster lamps" with circular globes helped to light the lodge room in a monumental manner. In 1962 the domed ceiling was modified by a lower suspended ceiling, this being done mainly to improve the acoustics, but is reversable. It is carpeted and has original heavy woolen upholstered benches with high backs running the full length of the room. Heavy wooden chairs and desks that match the benches complete the furnishings. Two smaller rooms for the various orders using the building. A pipe organ is installed in the balcony of the third story and used in the lodge work there. The original pipe organ has been re-worked and re-tuned. The small stairwell to the organ loft is served by quite steep steps and has no hoist or elevator. The balcony which is primarily the organ loft is open to the lodge room along the full length on the East side of the room.

The original wide wooden staircase rising immediatly from the front door serves the second floor as well. Another original wooden staircase along the interior of the East wall, rising from front to rear of the building serves the third floor. Electric chair lifts hoisted on cables along tracks laid on the left edge of the stairs provides the handicapped with means to reach the second and third floors.

The attic story is set off by a generally unadorned frieze that bears the carved inscription "Masonic Temple" in high relief. A smooth ashlar ogee moulding strip establishes the transition from frieze to projecting cornice that is embelished with modillions. Above the "classical" cornice line is a built up medieval crenelated roof--stressing the juxtaposition of classical revival and Romanesque styles at play in the architectural design.

This structure which cost \$51,347.23 to build in 1908 still remains a vital and prominent resource to the Community of Lewistown. With the exception of needed repointing the Masonic Temple is in fine condition.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Masonic
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                    1908                    BUILDER/ARCHITECT                    Wasmandorf & Eastman

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Masonic Temple in Lewistown, Montana meets criteria A and C in the evaluation material for National Register eligibility.

### CRITERIA A

The Masonic Temple of Lewistown is associated with events that reflect significant settlement patterns in the growth of Montana. At the time the cornerstone was placed on the Southeast corner of the present structure (Aug. 20, 1908), all the building's stonecutters, masons, and attendants, with few exceptions, had come from Croatia. The builders were natives of the rugged eastern Adriatic Sea shores where building stone was plentiful and lumber scarce, "where young boys took masonry as their line and learned the trade, where grandfathers handed their mallet, chisel and trowel to their grandsons." (statement from Croatian worker)

Likely, the large deposits of sandstone and a functioning quarry within 3/4 mile of the city center (where the Kramlick sawmill is now located) sponsored the Croatian settlement in Lewistown-- an environment well suited for the Croatian craft expertise. Many present structures dating from the turn of the century in Lewistown stand as tangible proof of their ability.

Most of these men came from the same place, the town of Bribir, Vinodoe, Vine Valley and migrated to the United States. Since Bribir was located near the largest Croatian seaport on the Adriatic, Rijeka, it was not uncommon for Croatian craftsmen to travel all around the world. As early as 1897 Croatian stonemasons such as Peter Tuss (the eventual contractor for The Masonic Temple) had come to the prosperous Montana community of Great Falls and then became aware of the employment opportunities available in the growing town of Lewistown--just 100 miles east by stagecoach. By 1915 the Croatian population was estimated at 100 in Lewistown and 373 in Fergus County (1910 Census). Among their earliest work in Lewistown which secured their positions in the construction field, were the Hawthorne school (1903) and the 1902 stone and cement reservoir. The prominence of such projects were seen as visible signs of prosperity and stability and were used as a lure to attract the "Empire Builder" James J. Hill and his Great Northern Railroad to extend their lines to Lewistown. On January 9, 1906 the Fergus County Democrat stated: "We have only to show James Hill that we have the finest town in the West, a town built of stone...most<sup>likely</sup> he will think several times about cutting us out." As far as the role the 1908 Masonic Temple played in this desired effect of stability and growth, the Fergus County Argus noted (on the date of the July 20, 1909 dedication) it is "The handsomest building in this part of the State." After contracts for stone work became scarce (around W.W.I) some of the Croatian population turned to farming and a number of them

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Original Minute book of Board of Masonic Temple Trustees. Start 6/8/1908.
2. Original minute book of Board of Trustees Lewistown Lodge 37 9/22/08.
3. Fergus County Argus, Vol XXVI #1,#2, #3,#20, Vol XXV #51 (1908-1909).
4. Fergus County Democrat, Vol V #1,#49, (1909).
5. Montana Magazine of Western History, Winter 78, "The Men From Bribir: the Croatian Stone-masons of Lewistown, MT.", Anna Zellick p. 44-55.
6. Golden Jubilee, 50th Anniversary Book, of the founding of Lewistown Lodge No. 37 A.F. & A.M.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.1033 Ac

QUADRANGLE NAME Lewistown

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:62500

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 2 6, 1, 9, 4, 9, 0 5, 2, 1, 3, 3, 5, 0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is a rectangular lot 50' by 90'. Bounded on the southeast by West Broadway Street, on the southwest by Fourth Avenue North, on the northwest by an alley and on the northeast by a lot owned by Katherine A. Jackson & Margaret J. Jackson.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
None			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George L. Machler - Secretary / Kingston Heath - State Architectural Historian April 79  
 ORGANIZATION DATE

Board of Trustees - Lewistown Lodge No. 37 A.F. & A.M. / State Historic Preservation Office  
 STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE

225 North Roberts 449-4584  
 CITY OR TOWN STATE

Helena, MT Montana

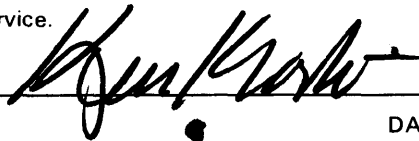
## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL    STATE    LOCAL X

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



TITLE

DATE May 15, 1979

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

William A. Braman  
 ATTEST: William A. Braman  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 2.3.79

DATE 7.2.79

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prospered in the agricultural field.

After World War I, brick and other forms of building construction were preferred (except for additions to extant structures) and the stone masonry building tradition that has characterized the early structures of Lewistown had passed. The Masonic Temple remains today, an important reminder of the brilliant craft technique of the Croatian workers, and is a symbol of the growth of Lewistown whose first Masonic Lodge hales back<sup>o</sup> the beginnings of the town where it held its first meetings, in 1889, in a wooden false front frame structure.

### CRITERIA C

The Masonic Temple embodies the distinctive characteristics of a method of stone construction as well as the prominent elements of a style undergoing change.

The Croatian immigrant masons who laid the stone for this building were excellent craftsmen in their own right. Large sandstone blocks were delivered to the Masonic Temple building site by horse power where they were carved and polished according to the specifications of the building plans. They shaped all the stone on the site including the isolated archway at the entrance, all columns (including bases and capitols), the ornamental keystone on the first floor, the raised lettering along the frieze line reading "Masonic Temple", and the date, 1908, carved in high relief between the second and third floors. The most intricate part of this building facade was ornamental stone cutting done by six experienced men, including the contractor, Peter Tuss: Pete Drezick, George Drezick, George Ligatich, Vincent Kalafatic and John Plovanic.

As was the custom of these craftsmen, the back wall and the side (east) wall were laid up with irregular stones left over from the more monumental street elevations which were laid in regular courses of quarry faced sandstone. The fine condition of this building today and the consistency with which these workmen were hired throughout Lewistown is testament to their capable craftsmanship. The Masonic Temple remains a leading example of the Croatian immigrant's craft technique.

### STYLISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

The 1908 Masonic Temple is a substantially built three story (and basement) sandstone structure that merges the fading Romanesque Style (popular from the late 1880's - C1900 in Montana) and the burgeoning classical influence. The Classical Revival, while being ushered into this country by the classical academicism of such structures as the Boston Public Library (1888-95), did not begin to be felt in Montana until the first years of the twentieth century--mostly in the form of small town libraries such as the 1901 Wm. K. Kohrs Memorial Library in Deer Lodge, Mt. This structure, then, exists in the watershed of two styles. The Romanesque qualities are present in the four-square

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massiveness of the form, the rock-faced texture of the stone, the round headed windows (though they read also as classical arches on the facade with the prominent keystones), the contrast of stone texture and finally the subtle reference to roof battlements. The Classical Revival statements in this building are also subtly stated though they generally define the basic character of the building. Representing the later, (and more refined) period of the beaux-arts tradition, the building expresses a calm symmetrical composition (at odds with its Romanesque identity) and utilizes classical stylistic vocabulary as the colossal (two story) pilasters in the Ionic order. These columns, which rise from the raised basement, divide and discipline the facade into three bays-- the central stairwell (expressed below by the Roman arch order entry treated in an unclassical manner in its dramatic free standing location) and the larger lodge rooms on either side. Finally, the modillions along the cornice line and the bracketed keystones assert the classical revival tendencies that would endure on American architecture into the 1950's.

The Masonic Temple was designed by Otto F. Wasmandorff and George D. Eastman. Wasmandorff was born in Chicago, Illinois, July 24, 1877. He was educated at St. John's Military Academy, Delafield, Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin, graduating from the civil engineering department in 1900. He came to Montana in the spring of 1901.

In 1908 he was elected Worshipful Master of Lewistown Lodge #37, A.F. & A.M. Being an architect and working with George D. Eastman he was no doubt, largely responsible for seeing the design of the building conformed to the teachings and tenets of the Lodge. When this knowledge was combined with the skill of the Croatian stone masons, the result was a building with beauty that spoke of the lodge work that would be performed within its walls in the symbols woven into the exterior and interior design.

Recent doctoral work done by Jim Rogers at the University of Missouri lends added significance to the architects in charge. Rogers maintains that the Strain Brothers, building in Lewistown (c.1914), designed by Wasmandorff and Eastman, represents a significant early experiment in the perfecting of reinforced concrete curtain wall construction. Ironically, it is the new reliance on alternate modes of construction around World War I, that would lessen the desire for masonry construction in Lewistown and, hence, break down the Croatian craft tradition in load bearing stone construction which Wasmandorff and Eastman's earlier work, the Masonic Temple, represents.

### OUTLINE OF THE BUILDING PROGRAM

June 8, 1908

First meeting of Masonic Temple Trustees. Decision made to build a Masonic Temple based on the following general criteria; A- full basement; B- three stories; C- to be built of native stone; D- Otto F. Wasmandorff, Master of the Lodge and an architect, instructed

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to prepare model plans of the Masonic Temple.

- June 15, 1908      Excavation of basement awarded to Bert P. Melchert; at 75¢ per cubic yard.
- June 22, 1908      Walls of basement portion to be constructed of concrete. George D. Eastman, an architect, instructed to proceed with preparation of plans and specifications; to be paid at the rate of \$10.00 per day.
- June 29, 1908      Ordered two carloads of cement.
- July 13, 1908      Request water connection from the City of Lewistown.
- July 15, 1908      Advertise for bids for the stone work.
- July 19 1908      Henry J. Springer hired at \$6.00 per day to take charge of the construction of the basement.
- July 30, 1908      Low bid could not furnish bonds. Contract let to Peter Tuss; for the stone construction; for the sum of \$13,450.00. To furnish the material and do all work, whatever necessary pursuant to plans.
- Aug. 26, 1908      Formal laying of the cornerstone. This ceremony took place the same day the cornerstone was laid for the Fergus County Courthouse.
- Sept. 7, 1908      Call for bids for the carpenter work.
- Sept. 9, 1908      Received four bids for the carpenter work. Low bid was D.J. Kane, for \$2,929.00.
- Sept. 21, 1908      Bid from the Montana Lumber Co. of \$2,500.00 for all the mill work was accepted. Plumbing and heating was discussed; and call for bids.
- Nov. 23, 1908      Plumbing and heating bid awarded to Western Supply Co. of St. Paul; through the Montana Hardware; for the sum of \$4,527.93.
- Feb. 8, 1909      Advertise for bids for plastering 1st, 2nd, 3rd stories; bid to include work and all material.
- Feb. 16, 1909      Secretary ordered to secure \$6,000 insurance.



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- Feb. 22, 1909 Had three bids for plastering. Low bid was Green & Smith for \$2,600.00. Call for bids for electric wiring.
- Mar. 4, 1909 Had two bids for electric wiring. Low bid was Citizens Electric for \$1,000.00.
- July 12, 1909 Increased amount of insurance to \$20,000.
- July 20, 1909 Building was formally dedicated, Grand Master C.B. Nolan presiding. This was an all day affair that included impressive ceremonies and entertainment.
- July 26, 1909 Leased 1st floor room fronting Broadway and 4th Avenue to Cook-Reynolds (Land and Loans) for \$1,080.00 per year; no heat or light. Paid D.J. Kane \$276.25 for extra work.
- Aug. 12, 1909 Call for bids for carpenter work to finish basement. Also call for bids plastering basement.
- Oct. 30, 1909 Paid D.J. Kane \$789.00 for extra work. Paid Green & Smith \$370.21 for extra work.
- Dec. 17, 1909 Board of Masonic Temple Trustees, held a special meeting to make their final report on the construction of the Masonic Temple. They reported that the total cost of the Temple was \$51,347.23. A committee was appointed to audit the accounts of the Board. The work of the Board now being completed, was received and accepted and the Board was discharged.

Signed J.L. Stuart  
Secretary

Samuel Phillips  
Chairman