

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100004236

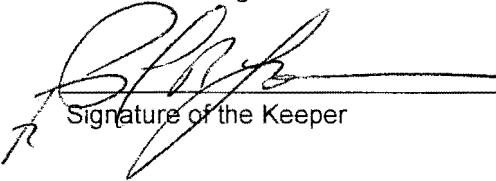
Date Listed: 08/07/2019

Property Name: Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

County: Broadwater

State: MT

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation


Signature of the Keeper

8/7/2019
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Bibliographic Citations:

The box for Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) should be checked. [Part 1 Tax certification approved 1/19/2018, Case #37711]

The MONTANA SHPO was notified of this amendment.

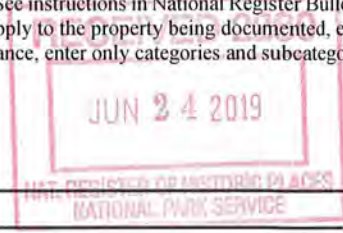
DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Other names/site number: 24BW1158

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 131 South Spruce Street

City or town: Townsend State: MT County: Broadwater

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

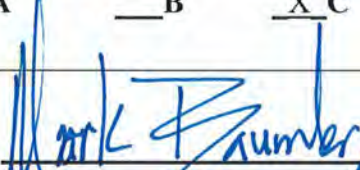
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

 Mark Faucher, MT State Historic Preservation Officer	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date: <u>6/11/19</u>
<u>STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE, MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

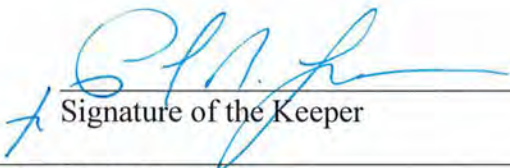
Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____


Signature of the Keeper

8/7/2019
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/meeting hall = fraternal

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/meeting hall = fraternal

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Minimal Traditional

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood, Concrete, Asbestos Cement

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Located near the commercial district of Townsend, Montana, Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 sits at the northeast corner of the intersection of South Spruce Street and B Street at 131 South Spruce Street in a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood. The building faces west onto South Spruce Street. Townsend, with a population of just over 1,800 individuals, lies in the Missouri River Valley with the Elkhorn Mountains to the west, the Big Belt Mountains to the east and Canyon Ferry lake to the north. The Minimal Traditional style lodge was designed by Helena architect Herbert Jacobson. The wood frame building was constructed in 1948 and functioned as Masonic Lodge No. 21 until the Helena Grand Lodge withdrew its charter in 2017. The lodge building exemplifies post-World War II era Minimal Traditional architecture and stands as the only such architectural example of this period in the city of Townsend, excluding private residences.

Narrative Description

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 (one contributing building)

The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 is a one-story, L-shaped Minimal Traditional-style building with a full daylight basement. The L-shaped plan is covered by intersecting hip roofs sheathed in asphalt shingles. The base of the L fronts on South Spruce Street. The building is wood frame construction and bears on a concrete foundation. The lodge building is clad in asbestos cement shingle siding. The building entries are located on the west, south, and east sides of the building. An interior brick chimney pierces the north roof slope. A rectangular vented cupola, also clad in asbestos shingles, functions as an attic vent central to the north-south section of the roof. With the exception of the façade, the building's windows consist of paired horizontal glazed 2/2 double-hung units. Exceptions are fixed light picture windows on the first floor flanking the main entry on South Spruce Street.

West Façade of Main Block: The primary entry occurs in a slightly recessed alcove central to the façade. The entry holds paired copper-clad doors topped by a two-light fixed transom. The entry is reached by an eight-step concrete staircase flanked by concrete planters. The façade features a ribbon of four fixed picture windows on the north and south flanking the entry, while the basement holds two paired 2/2 double-hung windows flanking the steps. The cornerstone, located on the southwest foundation corner, reads "Valley Lodge No. 21/A.F. & A. M./1947."

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

South Elevation of Main Block: Two paired horizontal 2/2 double-hung windows appear on the upper and lower zones of the elevation. A small enclosed porch topped by a pedimented gable roof sheathed in asphalt shingles projects just off-center to the west. The porch walls are also clad in asbestos cement siding. The doorway holds a four-light/one panel wood door.

East Elevation of Main Block: The east, rear, elevation of the main block contains two small 2/2 double-hung windows, one in the ground floor and a second in the second story. A paired 2/2 double-hung window is located just below and north of the second story window.

A small single-story shed roof addition projects east off the elevation covering about five feet of the rear, east, L projection. The shed roof of the small addition has been modified to allow full exposure of the paired double-hung windows above. The shed roof is sheathed in asphalt shingles and the walls are clad in asbestos cement siding. A doorway in the east façade contains a one-light metal mandoor. Small casement windows are in the east and south elevations.

South Elevation of "L": Four window openings allow light into the ground story of the south elevation of the "L" including a 2/2 double-hung window immediately east of the small shed addition, and three paired 2/2 double-hung units spaced evenly across the wall. The upper story lacks any fenestration.

East (rear) Elevation of "L": Two entries appear on this elevation. One, a metal mandoor, provides access to the upper story and is accessed by a wood staircase with small landing. The staircase features complete wood fabrication including risers, treads, and handrails. A recently installed ground floor doorway appears on the north end. It contains a one-light metal mandoor with a single fixed light.

North Elevation of Main Block/"L": The building's longest elevation holds five paired 2/2 double-hung windows on the ground floor and three units of the same style on the upper story.

Interior: The majority of the interior trim and finishes of the building are original and intact. With the exception of the Men's and Women's Club Rooms and the basement assembly hall, the main interior trim condition consists of a half-height, finish-grade plywood wainscoting capped with a standard "chair" rail. The paneling displays vertical installation with metallic bead joints between panels. The overall finish presents a mahogany nature in appearance and color. A wide "plank" fiberboard (Homasote) paneling with edge beading (painted in some areas) covers the upper portion of the wall ending in a simple, small profile cove molding at the ceiling intersection. Three horizontal courses of the fiberboard paneling create a picture molding style cap to the walls both in the main entry hall and Women's Club Room. The Men's Club Room is clad with half-height, vertical knotty pine tongue-and-groove wainscoting with a standard "chair" rail. The same fiberboard paneling and small profile cove molding covers the wall's upper portion. The Women's Club Room walls are vertically clad entirely in wide "plank" fiberboard (Homasote) paneling with edge beading and three horizontal courses at the top.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

The basement assembly hall features cladding of vertical knotty pine tongue-and-groove wainscoting over painted concrete foundation walls with a small profile cove molding at the ceiling. All interior doors, with the exception of the apartment, are wood flush panel doors stained to match the luan wainscoting. A few basement doors have painted finishes. The interior apartment doors are single panel wood with both stained and painted finishes. The main double entry door on the west facade is thought to be copper clad with a low-profile, full-width, single pane re-lite.

Landscaping

Landscaping is minimal on the lodge grounds. Sidewalks are on the west and south sides of the building. Gravel spaces with shrubs are on the west side. Two trees (a mountain ash and pine) grow off the northwest corner of the façade. A parking area is along B Street.

Integrity

The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 retains excellent integrity. The building sits at its original location and there have been no substantial changes to the exterior or the interior of the building. It is a good example of a Minimal Traditional-style building and displaces the simple exterior characteristic of the design, including the truncated eaves, windows and centralized entry. Asbestos cement siding was common to the style in the post-WWII years and is present and unchanged on this building. The fenestration is mostly intact as most windows are original, though the glass in the large fixed windows on the façade were recently replaced by new energy efficient double pane units; however, the original location and number of windows remains. The wood staircase leading to the second story rear doorway was recently replaced, but pre-replacement photographs indicate that the existing structure is of the dimensions and appearance as the original staircase. The ground floor level doorway installed into the rear elevation is recent, but does not detract from the overall integrity of the building. Similarly, the south porch and doorway remain true to original design. There have been no changes to the roof configuration. The lodge retains its historic materials, workmanship and association with the Townsend Masonic society. The architectural rendering of the building made in 1947 indicates there has been no significant diminishment of the Valley Masonic Lodge's integrity or association with the fraternal society.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1948-1969

Significant Dates

1948

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Herbert Jacobson/Architect
Arthur Cunningham/Builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C at a local level of significance.¹ Under Criterion A, the building is noteworthy due to its direct association with the Masons in Townsend, a fraternal society that had been active in the community since 1884. The lodge building was constructed specifically to house the A.F. & A. M. Valley Lodge No. 21.² Freemasons have a long and significant history

¹ Masonic lodges serve as the basic organizational unit of Freemasonry.

² A. F. & A. M. stands for Ancient Free and Accepted Masons.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

in Montana, playing a key role in the development of the state beginning with the first meeting on Mullan Pass, west of Helena (and northwest of Townsend about 40 miles) in 1862. The Masons, and its associated organizations, such as the Order of the Eastern Star and Rainbow Girls, were active in community and economic development of Montana. Lodges were once a common sight throughout the state as they functioned not only as centers of fraternal rites and activities, but also as places of worship, and community meeting places. The organization conducted formal business in the lodge, organized charitable events, and elected new members to the society. Masonic degrees were conferred in the lodge. Many Masonic lodges continue to occupy prominent places in the communities they represent.

Under Criterion C, the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 stands as an excellent and representative example of the Minimal Traditional style in a fraternal society building, incorporating many of the architectural features associated with the style including a shallow to medium pitched roof, simple floor plan, simple entry, the use of simple and straightforward fenestration, and minimal ornamentation. The use of asbestos cement siding was also common on Minimal Traditional-style buildings constructed after 1945. Built in 1948, the appearance of Valley Lodge No. 21 has changed very little since its construction. It stands as the only example of this architectural style, other than a few examples built for residential use in Townsend.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the history of Townsend and the local Masonic fraternal society after World War II. The Valley Masonic Lodge was the twenty-first lodge to organize in Montana in 1883. In 1884, the lodge relocated from its original location in nearby Centerville and moved to nearby Townsend, where it received its official charter from the Grand Lodge in Helena. Prior to 1948, the order had primarily met in rented venues. This building served as the Masons' second standalone lodge in Townsend. The lodge served as the focal point for Masonic rites, rituals, and events for nearly seventy years. Local Masons have served in important political positions in Townsend, such as mayors and city commission members, over the years. Others have been prominent businessmen, ranchers, and schoolteachers, and one rose to prominence as a Montana territorial legislator in 1867. The society's day-to-day business was conducted in the lodge as were dinners, lectures, civic meetings, and, for a time, Latter-Day Saint church services. Associated organizations, such as Esther Chapter No. 3 of the Order of Eastern Star, and the Townsend Assembly of the Order of Rainbow for Girls (founded in 1946) also conducted regular meetings and investitures in the lodge. Other public uses of the lodge included Boy and Girl Scout meetings and public lectures.

The lodge is also eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an example of late twentieth century Minimal Traditional architecture in Montana. The building displays many of the architectural features common to the style, including an "L" design, a hip roof, largely rectangular footprint, asbestos cement siding, simple fenestration illustrated by the horizontal 2/2 double-hung windows, the simple entries, and the lack of

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

decorative detail. Amazingly, the exterior of the lodge building has not been significantly changed or otherwise altered since its construction in 1948. A small addition was added sometime during the historic period and a new doorway added to the rear in 2019, but the changes are minimal and do not greatly affect the overall integrity of the building. It appears as it did in the 1947 architects rendering of the building and is an excellent example of a non-residential Minimal Traditional-style building.

The interior of the building still exhibits the historic floorplan and materials, such as the wood paneling, wainscoting, and wall board ceilings. The carpeting, while not original, appears to date to the 1950s or 1960s. The interior space still functions in its original capacity as a meeting place. Adding to the historic feeling of the lodge, much of the original furniture purchased specifically for this building remains.

The Masons in Montana³

The Masons hold deep roots in Montana history, beginning with the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Though the explorers left little tangible evidence of their passage, three rivers in Madison County, the Wisdom, Philosophy and Philanthropy, are named for Masonic ritual. Meriwether Lewis, likely the first Mason to set foot in the region, left this evidence of his Masonic affiliation.

Half a century later in September of 1862, Captain James Fisk's wagon train camped on the western edge of the Rocky Mountains, northwest of Townsend. Nathaniel Langford, George Gere, and Richard Charlton - the only Masons in the company - climbed to the summit of Mullan Pass where they opened and closed an informal lodge of Master Masons. This meeting of the three Masons, according to Masonic tradition and as an alternative to other theories, is one of three events represented in the Vigilante ultimatum "3-7-77" that symbolizes Montana's turbulent early history. The second event was the funeral of William Bell, whose death of mountain fever on November 12, 1862, the first natural death at Bannack, brought 76 Masons together for his funeral representing the first formal fraternal gathering. Bell himself was the 77th Mason. The third momentous event was the forming of the vigilance committee, or Vigilantes, at Virginia City on December 22, 1863.⁴ This came in the wake of the murder trial and conviction of George Ives. The next day, seven men, all reputedly Masons, organized the Vigilantes and adopted the "3-7-77" signature, leading to the wholesale crackdown on individuals suspected of unsavory deeds. Not all Vigilantes were Masons and although this theory has been often challenged, Masons undeniably played a very important and recognized role in laying the strong foundation upon which the state of Montana rests.

³ Taken from Ellen Baumler, Benton Avenue Cemetery, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, NR #03000689, Listed July 24, 2003. Nomination on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, Montana.

⁴ The numbers appear on the official logo and shoulder patches of the Montana Highway Patrol. The numbers have also been utilized as the name of a scholastic honor society at Helena High School in Helena, Montana. Until recently, the meaning of the numbers has been in dispute, but recent scholarship indicates that they have Masonic meaning, which ties the vigilantes closer to Montana Masonry. Frederick Allen, *A Decent Orderly Lynching: The Montana Vigilantes*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 360.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Mason lodges were among the first fraternal societies to organize in Montana beginning in the 1860s with the gold rushes. The first lodge meeting was held in Nevada City in November 1863, with Lodge No. 1 formed in nearby Virginia City the following month. Other lodges soon followed. As the numbers grew, the Virginia City lodge, Montana City lodge, and Helena City lodge united to form the Grand Lodge of Montana.⁵ Since then, over 150 Masonic lodges remain organized in the state to serve the fraternity's members.

Masons played significant political roles in the state from the first legislature in Bannack in December 1864 through the present time. At least four Montana governors and a prominent US senator and advisor to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during the Great Depression, Burton K. Wheeler, were members of the society. Other prominent Masons have had a profound impact on Montana history. Wilbur Fisk Sanders, Sam Ford, Forrest Anderson, and Tim Babcock served as territorial and state governors in Montana; William A. Clark was a banker, Butte copper king, US Senator, and one of the country's richest men in the early part of the twentieth century. Recent prominent Montana Masons include US Representative Denny Rehberg, current US Senator John Tester, actor Wallace Kurth, and country singer Mel Tillis.⁶ In 2019, there were 155 active masonic lodges in Montana, encompassing the entire state.

Townsend

Townsend, like many Montana communities, owes its existence to the Northern Pacific Railway. As the railroad pushed its way across the territory in 1882 and 1883, it deposited towns in its wake. One of those was Townsend, after the maiden name of the wife of former Northern Pacific president Charles P. Wright. The railroad platted the iconic T town in the spring of 1882-1883.⁷ The location of the town in a fertile valley promised to "...become one of the most densely settled and richest in Montana" and "...will have a population of at least 1,500 by the middle of next summer."⁸ Lots began to sell for \$300 each with the expectations high for the newly platted town.⁹ Many of the population arrived from the nearby town of Radersburg, who moved to be nearer the railroad.¹⁰ Others arrived from other surrounding towns including Canton, Centerville, White Sulphur Springs, Bedford, and Helena.¹¹ A post office and first newspaper opened in the community in May 1883. The railroad town soon became an important shopping point and trade center for area ranches, farms, logging camps, and mines.

⁵ Grand Lodge of Montana, *Montana Masonic History (abridged)*, viewed at: <https://www.grandlodgemontana.org/>, accessed April 11, 2019.

⁶ The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, *Grand Lodge of the Month, Grand Lodge of Montana*, viewed at: <https://gwmemorial.org/blogs/gl-of-the-month/grand-lodge-of-montana>, accessed April 11, 2019.

⁷ The head of the "T" parallels the railroad tracks and is officially known as Front Street, but is also the route of US Highways 12 and 289. The leg of the T is Broadway Street.

⁸ "A New City," *The Daily Independent*, November 29, 1882.

⁹ *Broadwater Bygones: A History of Broadwater County, (Townsend: Broadwater County Historical Society, 1977)*, 172.

¹⁰ "A New City," *The Daily Independent*, November 29, 1882.

¹¹ *Broadwater Bygones*, 172.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

By 1890, despite the earlier published growth expectations, the town claimed a population of 245 and a vibrant commercial district located along Broadway Street. Townsend became the seat of Broadwater County in 1895.¹² The early 1900s witnessed the expansion of Townsend, with the replacement of the original boardwalks with concrete and the installation of a water system. The 1920s saw the first good street grading using red shale for the surface, subsequently followed by the paving of Townsend's main street with the construction of the State Highway.¹³

Except for the drought and depression-stricken 1920s, Townsend has enjoyed steady growth. Although *Montana: A State Guide Book* lamented in 1939 that the city was "once a busy place, [that] lost much of its liveliness when automobiles and good roads brought Helena within easy travel distance of the inhabitants of the valley ranches," the community is still an active trade and shipping center. Today, the town boasts a population of almost 1900, several hundred more than the predicted population expected in the mid 1880s. It is the only incorporated town in Broadwater County. Many of its residents work in nearby Helena.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

On December 5, 1875, masons in Meagher County chartered "Valley Lodge No. 21 (A.F. & A.M.) in the farming community of Centerville just north of present Townsend.¹⁴ Local butcher Hiram T. Conner was the lodge's first master; Conner, as well as many of the early lodge members in the area, was reputed to be active in law enforcement with the Vigilantes.¹⁵ The lodge, however, was not officially authorized by the Grand Lodge until it moved to Townsend and obtained a charter there in 1884. From 1884 to 1927, the organization met in its own hall on the second floor of Wood's store. It then met in the International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) hall until 1946, when that order disbanded and sold its building.

During the lodge's early period, the sixth Grand Master of Montana, James R. Weston, was a member of Valley Lodge No. 21.¹⁶ Weston's time in Montana harkened back to the earliest days of the gold rush, when Montana was still a territory. Born in New York in 1824, Weston arrived in Bannack in July 1863. For a time, he worked as a placer miner and was a witness to the hanging of Henry Plummer by the vigilantes in January 1864. He, like many men at the time, moved from mining camp to mining camp in search of a paying claim. Weston eventually

¹² *Broadwater Bygones*, 171-173; *Montana Place Names from Alzada to Zortman: A Montana Historical Society Guide*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2009), 267; Federal Writers' Project, *Montana: A State Guide Book*, (New York: Hastings House, 1939), 218-219; Roberta Carkeek Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1990, 34, 268-269.

¹³ *Broadwater Bygones*, 223.

¹⁴ The Fourth State Legislature created Broadwater County from parts of Jefferson and Meagher counties. Masonic lodges were numbered sequentially from number one (Virginia City) in the order in which they were formed. Thus, Valley Lodge No. 21 was the twenty-first masonic lodge formed in Montana in 1875 in Centerville, a mile or so north of present Townsend. Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana*, 34.

¹⁵ *Broadwater Bygones*, 3.

¹⁶ *Broadwater Bygones*, 230; "Grand Lodge AF & AM of Montana will Conduct Dedication of New Masonic Temple," *The Independent Record*, May 28, 1948.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

became a hotelier in Diamond City at Confederate Gulch (north of Townsend), the postmaster of Radersburg (west of Townsend), and finally, a drugstore owner in Townsend. He served in the Montana territorial legislature in 1867. He later ascended to and served as Grand Master of Montana from 1902 until his death in Townsend in August 1904.¹⁷

After a couple decades of using the IOOF hall to hold their meetings, the Masons desired a dedicated lodge of their own. In fact, they made plans to build a lodge in Townsend many years prior to the actual laying of the cornerstone for the building in September 1947. The building committee met regularly during World War II to formulate plans for its new temple. Although intent on the construction of a new lodge, the entry of the United State in World War II altered their plans. Instead of investing what money had been saved for the lodge construction, on January 24, 1942, the organization passed a resolution to invest the money in Defense Bonds instead. The resolution stated that it was more important to maintain "American Liberty until such a time when we can consider our own comforts and pleasures."

A few years after the end of the War, on May 24, 1947, a resolution detailed the Masons' intent to proceed with construction of a Masonic Temple based on a pre-1947 conceptual floor plan developed by the lodge's building committee. With the intent to proceed, all that was needed was an appropriate building location. Two months later, in July, the Masons purchased the future site of their lodge from Broadwater County rancher and legislator Howard Doggett. Doggett wore many hats in addition to rancher and legislator; he worked for the Department of Agriculture in Washington D.C., and also served a similar capacity in Belgium.¹⁸ Conveniently, Doggett was a member of the lodge and of the building committee. The planned site for the new lodge was across Spruce Street from the IOOF building.¹⁹

In June 1947, the Masons retained Helena, Montana architect Herbert Jacobson to design their new temple. On July 16th, the fraternal society officially incorporated as Valley Lodge No. 21 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Townsend. The new company relied on Masons to fund the building and members of the lodge made up most of the construction crew. Keeping the construction effort in the Masonic family, Helena Mason and carpenter Arthur Cunningham oversaw the construction of the \$30,000 building project. The *Townsend Star* reported that the new lodge would be "furnished in fireproof Mansville shingles and built as nearly fireproof as possible."²⁰ Construction of the lodge began on September 1st and within two weeks, the basement had been excavated and the concrete poured for the footings. Lodge members set the cornerstone of the building on October 18, 1947.²¹

¹⁷ *Progressive Men of the State of Montana*, (Chicago: Warner, Beers & Co., 1902), 1297-1298.

¹⁸ *Broadwater Bygones*, 48-49.

¹⁹ The documents are in the possession of the building's current owner, Tina Homann. *Broadwater Bygones*, 230; "Grand Lodge AF & AM."

²⁰ "Masons of Broadwater County Planning to Build Temple; Construction to Start Soon," *The Independent Record*, July 26, 1947.

²¹ "Masons of Broadwater County;" Business Entity Search; "Business Firm Files Articles of Incorporation," *The Great Falls Tribune*, July 16, 1947; "Grand Lodge AF & AM."

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Even before Cunningham completed construction of the temple, the Masons held their first meeting there on January 10, 1948, despite the lack of carpets and furniture.²² At the January meeting, lodge members installed officers of Esther Chapter No. 3, Order of the Eastern Star. The *Townsend Star* reported that the meeting would

[Be] a proud day for members of the local order when they enjoy for the first time in many years the feel of their own hall. The work has been done with great expediency, a crew of workmen ... having accomplished the construction since early fall. When completed inside and out and the last paint and furnishing procured, the Temple will rate with any in the state and will serve a very fine purpose in the community at large.²³

Society members touted the wall board ceilings, the wood-paneled walls, and the spaciousness of the edifice. In April 1948, echoing the use of Masons for the physical construction of the building, the lodge members gathered to landscape the grounds surrounding the new lodge. Work included pouring cement for sidewalks, leveling the grounds and planting trees and shrubs.²⁴

The Masons formally dedicated their new temple on May 29, 1948. The ceremony was attended by 200 lodge members and their families, along with Masons from other communities and the Grand Lodge Masons in Helena. The newspaper described the “ceremonies for the dedication ... of ancient and traditional nature, embodying rituals of old origin.” Dedication activities included speeches by local and state Masons, songs sung by the members of Esther Chapter No. 3 and refreshments provided by the lodge.²⁵

Since its construction, Valley Lodge No. 21 has functioned not only as a meeting location for Masonic-based gatherings, but also as an important meeting place for the Townsend community from 1948 to 2017.²⁶ Along with lodge meetings, pot luck dinners, and other rites, many sister and brother organizations utilized the lodge for regular meetings and events. These included the Esther Chapter No. 3 of the Order of Eastern Star (the female counterpart to the Masons), and the Townsend Assembly of the Order of Rainbow for Girls (instituted in 1946). In 1938, the Esther Chapter No. 3 celebrated their golden jubilee, an event noted by several papers throughout the

²² A “very fine grade of Wilton carpet” had been purchased and was awaiting installation. The lodge had also purchased Maroon leather armchairs, but they had yet to arrive.

²³ “Valley Lodge will Meet in New Temple Saturday,” *The Townsend Star*, January 8, 1948.

²⁴ Much of the original landscaping performed by the Masons no longer exists, replaced by parking areas. Two mature trees, however, stand near the northwest façade of the building, the only vestiges of the original landscaping. “Townsend Masons Gather in New Hall,” *The Independent Record*, January 13, 1948; “Joint Installation Here Saturday,” *The Townsend Star*, January 15, 1948; “Masons will turn out Enbody to Improve Temple Grounds,” *The Townsend Star*, April 8, 1948.

²⁵ “Dedication of New Temple Brought Large Crowd,” *The Townsend Star*, June 3, 1948; “Grand Lodge AF & AM.”

²⁶ “Grand Lodge AF & AM of Montana,” viewed at <http://www.grandlodgeofmontana.org>.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

area.²⁷ The large assembly areas on the first floor and basement of the temple provided the only meeting space, other than the school gymnasium, where large numbers of Townsend citizens could gather indoors.²⁸ Community groups that took advantage of these spaces included local Boy and Girl Scout troops, and the Church of Latter Day Saints. The church called the Masonic Temple home prior to the construction of their church in 1960 and again in 2011 during church renovations. Valley Lodge No. 21 hosted annual Harvest Dinners and held annual appreciation dinners for civil servants of the police and fire departments, in addition to community events and meetings, including lectures by agricultural and the civil defense organizations. The lodge also housed its caretakers in the modest apartment in the building's southwest wing.²⁹

The Valley Lodge appears frequently in local newspapers for conducting graveside rites for its deceased members and investitures of officers in the lodge hierarchy. Members of the lodge often served in locally prominent roles, primarily as civic leaders and area ranchers. Masons and their associated societies continued to use the lodge building until March 2017 when the Grand Lodge in Helena revoked the lodge's charter and sold the building to Tina Homann who is currently developing plans to renovate it.³⁰

Architectural Significance

The Minimal Traditional Style is a deliberate attempt to wear the aesthetics of simplicity and economy. The style reflects the economic constraints of the time, garnering popularity during the Great Depression. The style's construction generally occurred from the mid-1930s to around 1950. Following the War, the simplicity of the design, forgoing detailing and decorative features, allowed for efficient construction. Through the years, many of these buildings have undergone significant alteration in an attempt to make them less plain.³¹ Hallmarks of the style include minimal decoration, simple design, the use of double hung windows, low to medium simple pitched rooflines that included both gable and hipped (usually with no eaves or narrow boxed eaves), simple floorplans, rectangular shape often with small ells ("L"), and a variety of cladding including asbestos.³² While the style is generally associated with houses, its use also crossed over to commercial and organizational ventures.

²⁷ "Golden Jubilee Is Observed By Townsend Stars," *The Helena Dailey Independent*, May 25, 1938; "Golden Jubilee Marked By O.E.S.," *The Montana Standard*, May 29, 1938.

²⁸ Although access to the local Townsend newspaper, the *Townsend Star*, is limited due to it not yet being digitized, the activities of Valley Lodge No. 21 were regularly reported on in the Helena *Independent Record* over a 21-year period. The *Independent Record* commonly carried notifications and consistent stream of Masonic events, rituals, and celebrations held in the Townsend lodge, thirty miles away. The paper also regularly reported non-Masonic gatherings including Boy Scout and Girl Scout meetings and public lectures.

²⁹ Letter, Tina Homann, building owner, to Brad Kahler, High Plains Architects, October 19, 2017; "Dedication of New Temple Brought Large Crowd."

³⁰ "A Short History of Freemasonry in Montana," viewed at <http://www.helenamasonry.org>; Helena *Independent Record*, 1948-1969.

³¹ Ione R. Stegler, "Style 101, Minimal Traditional, 1935-1950," viewed at <http://isarchitecture.com/style-101-minimal-traditional/>, accessed April 12, 2019.

³² Stegler; "Antique Home," Minimal Traditional Architecture, viewed at <http://www.antiquehome.org/Architectural-Style/minimal-traditional.htm>, accessed April 12, 2019; "Antique

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 is clearly a product of the immediate post World War II era, both in its design and in the materials used in its construction. Stylistic influences of Minimal Traditional Style are present and well represented on the building. Understated traditional detailing is visible throughout the building and though these characteristics lack originality and artistic flourish, they compensate with overall craftsmanship and sturdiness; the original finishes inside and out are still intact and in good condition. The hipped roof over the ell-shaped massing is clad in asphalt shingles with a smaller projecting gable at the enclosed entry porch on the south facade. The building's exterior walls also display asbestos cladding and windows are generally single-pane, horizontal glazed, 2/2 double-hung wood with painted exterior and stained interior finishes. The Lodge's main entry is centrally located on the west facade with flanking windows, indicative of the post-World War II Minimal Traditional Style. This style and symmetry are a fitting model for the Freemasons' mission to "...walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man, squaring our actions by the square of virtue and ever remembering that we are traveling upon the Level of time...."³³

The materials utilized in the Lodge's construction reflect the post-war era and the shift from wartime industries to a building industry boom. The most prevalent materials visible throughout the lodge's interior and exterior are fiber-board (homasote) paneling, luan plywood paneling, and asbestos-cement shingles. Fiber-board and asbestos-cement shingles had a very limited but widespread presence in the building industry in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The asbestos cement shingles were a durable, low-maintenance exterior treatment predominantly utilized in residential applications. Their use as cladding for the lodge, a larger public building, is a non-typical application lending to the building's unique, minimal aesthetic. The availability of the asbestos cement shingles and ease of installation and workability made these materials a popular choice in the post-war period. The fiber-board and luan paneling are installed with a high standard of craftsmanship, typical of the Minimal Traditional Style philosophy. The paneling is installed as a wainscoting but with a non-typical height of six feet in the entry halls and stairwells, which accentuates the height of the spaces. The horizontal orientation of the fiber-board paneling near the ceiling of the main entry hall and women's club room gives the subtle impression of a picture molding cap typical of more stately and ornate interiors of the period. In its design and construction, the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 is a significant example of the Minimal Traditional Style of post-World War II construction in Townsend, Montana.

Home Style," Minimal Traditional Style—1925-1950, viewed at <http://www.antiquehomestyle.com/styles/minimal-traditional.htm>, accessed April 12, 2019.

³³ Geoff Williams, "All About Post-War Architecture," viewed at www.hgtv.com/design/home-styles/all-about-post-war-architecture. Selected Post-World War II Residential Architectural Styles and Building Types, Colorado, viewed at www.legacy.historycolorado.org, accessed March 30, 2019.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Herbert Jacobson, Architect

Born in North Dakota in July 1913, Herbert Jacobson obtained a degree in Architecture and Engineering from Montana State College (now Montana State University) in 1940. After serving in the US Navy during World War II, he moved to Helena and worked as an architect for the Montana Lumber Dealers Association before going into business with Sig Berg in 1957. It was while employed by the Montana Lumber Dealers Association that Jacobson designed the Valley Lodge No. 21 Masonic lodge in Townsend. He continued the practice after Berg's retirement with various partners. Locally, Jacobson's other projects include his architectural services to the Helena Area Habitat for Humanity. He was particularly interested in historic preservation and was instrumental in the renovation of the Diamond Block in downtown Helena and was involved in the Urban Renewal program in the city as well.³⁴

³⁴ "Herbert Larche Jacobson," *The Independent Record*, September 5, 1995.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Broadwater County, MT

Name of Property

County and State

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Williams, Geoff. “All About Post-War Architecture.” Viewed at www.hgtv.com/design/home-styles/all-about-post-war-architecture. Accessed March 30, 2019.

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: High Plains Architects

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.326

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- 1. Latitude: 46.31920 Longitude: -111.51782
- 2. Latitude: Longitude:
- 3. Latitude: Longitude:
- 4. Latitude: Longitude:

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 measures 95 x 130 feet. The rectangle consists of four city lots that encompass the fraternal lodge building. The lodge occupies Lots 23-26 of Block 34 of the Townsend Original Townsite. The building is located in the SW¼ SE¼ NE¼ of Section 31, T7N, R2E.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is determined by the building and the four city lots it occupies at the intersection of South Spruce and B streets in Townsend, Montana.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jon Axline/Historian
organization: Private Contractor
street & number: 448 Parriman Street
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59602
e-mail jaxline@mt.gov
telephone: (406) 422-2111
date: April 2019

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Tina Homann
street & number 708 Dry Gulch Road telephone _____
city or town Townsend state MT zip code 58644

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property

Broadwater County, MT
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log, All Photographs

Name of Property: Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
City or Vicinity: Townsend
County: Broadwater State: MT
Photographer: Jon Axline (exterior)/Brad Kahler (interior)
Date Photographed: April 2019/April 2017
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
1 of ____.

Please see Continuation Sheets

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

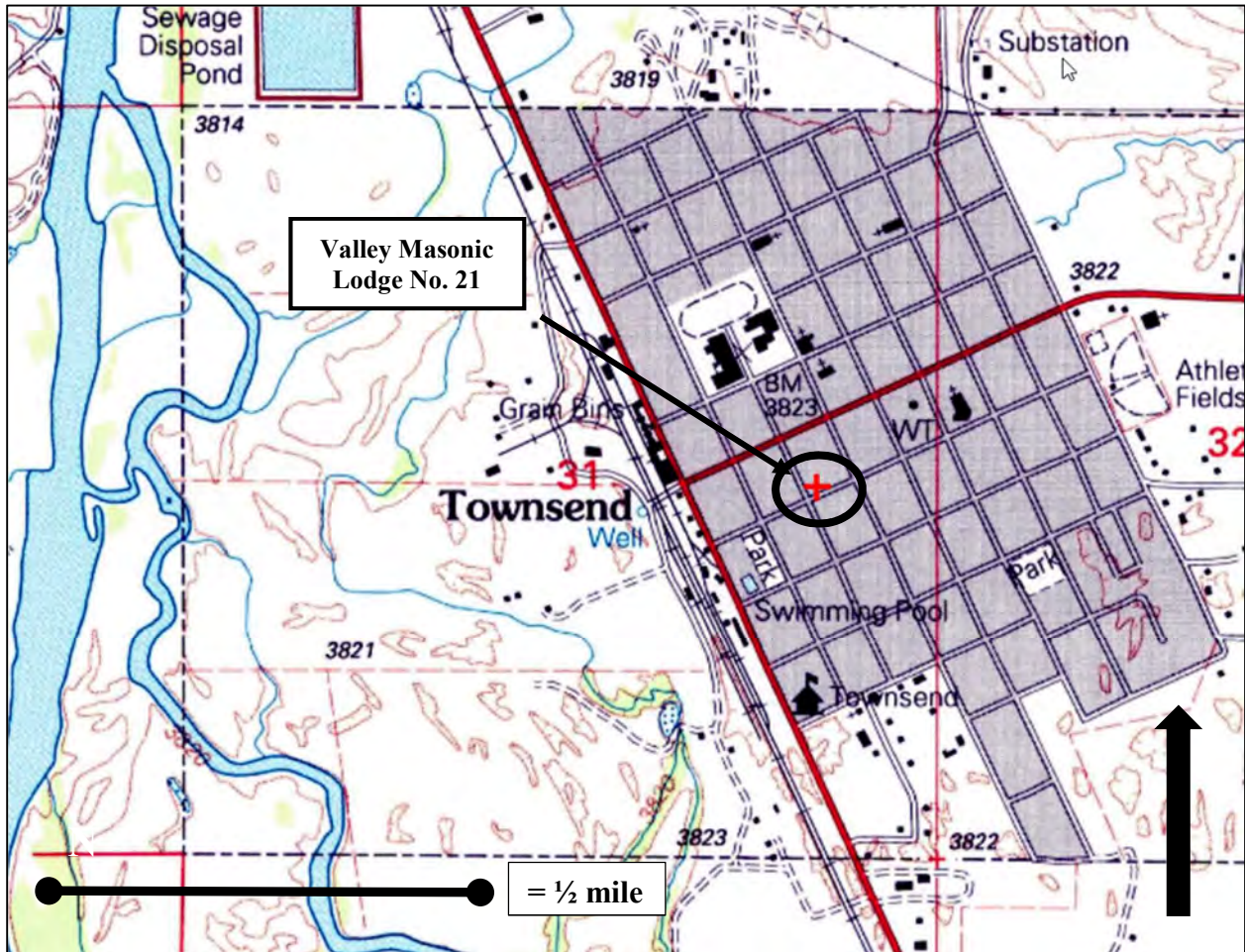
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 23



Location of the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21. Found on the USGS 7.5' Quadrangle map: Townsend (2017).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 24



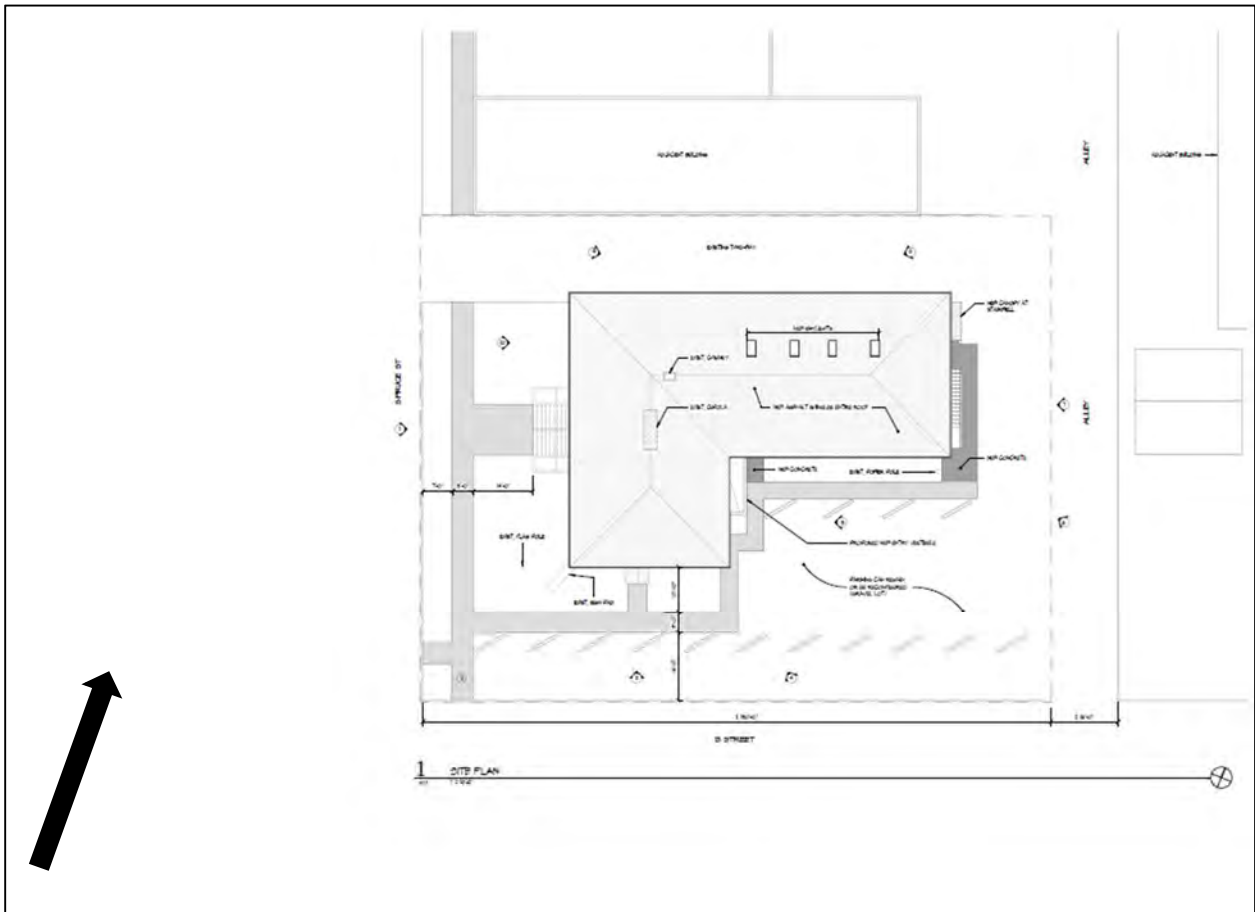
**Aerial view of the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 (center of image, outlined in black box),
Townsend, MT**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 25



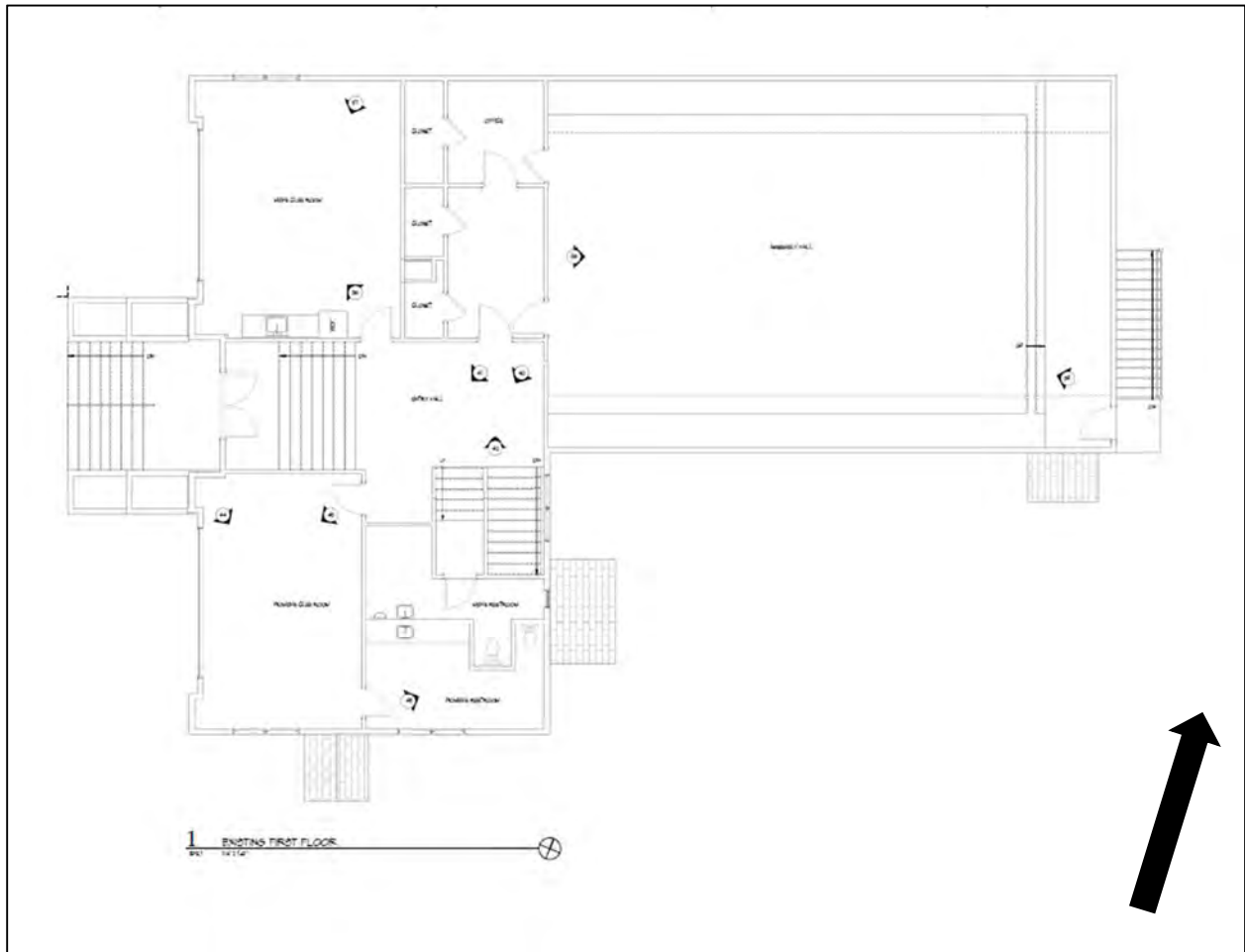
Site plan for Valley Mason Lodge No. 21

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 26



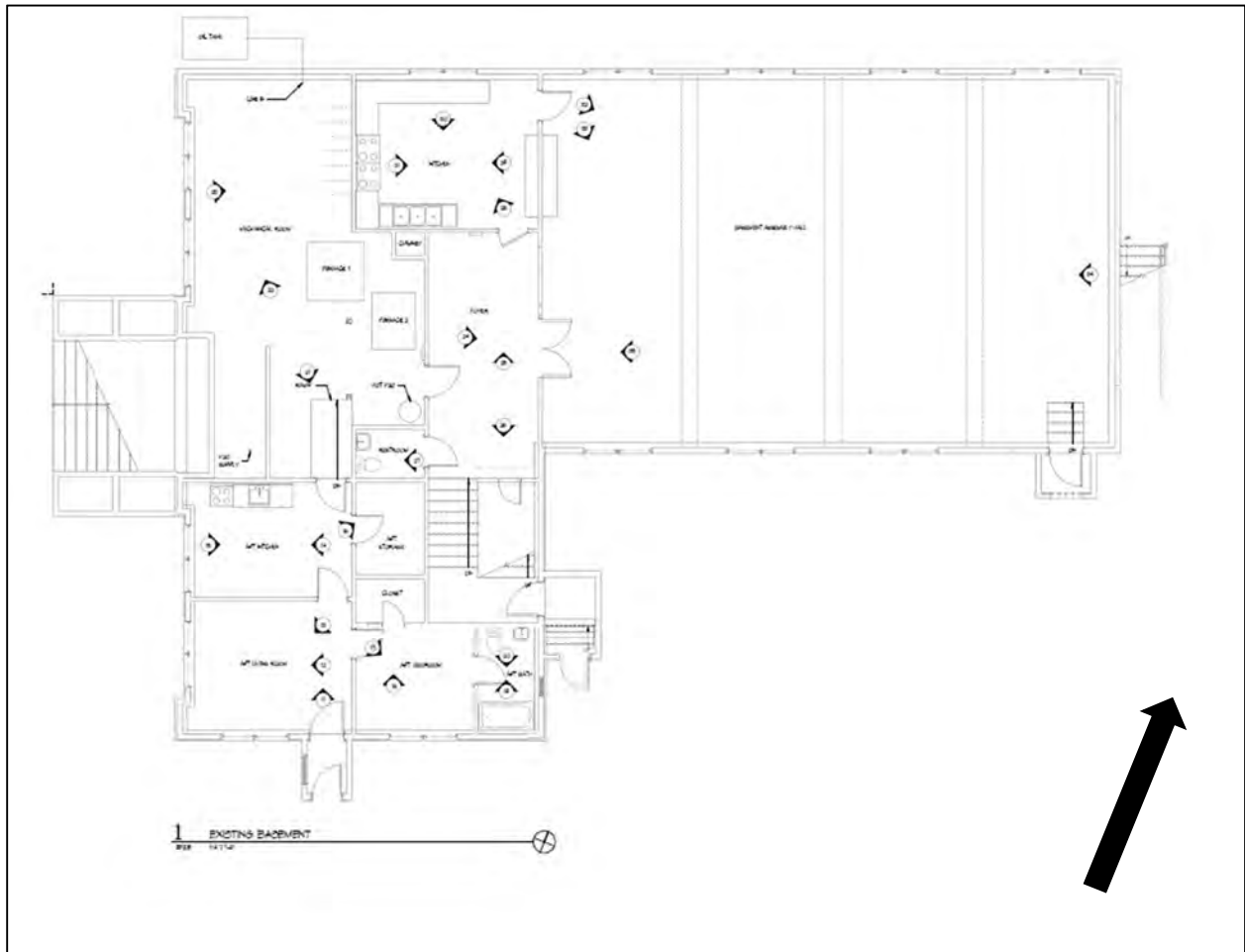
First floor plan for Valley Mason Lodge No. 21

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 27



Basement plan for Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 28

Photo Log, All Photographs:

Name of Property: Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21
City or Vicinity: Townsend
County: Broadwater State: MT
Photographer: Jon Axline (exterior)/Brad Kahler (interior)
Date Photographed: April 2019/April 2017



Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to northeast.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo.21_0001

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 29



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, View to the east.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0002.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 30



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to northeast.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0003.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 31



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to north.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0004.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Maps and Historic Photographs Page 32



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to the west.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0005.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 33



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to northeast.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0006.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number National Register Photographs

Page 34



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to the west.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0007.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 35



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, view to southwest.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0008.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 36



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, detail of west façade, view to east.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0009.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 37



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, detail of enclosed porch, view to the north.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0010.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 38



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, detail of sidewalk stamp, view to north.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0011.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 39



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21,, detail of cornerstone, view to east.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0012.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs Page 40



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, first floor assembly hall.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0013.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 41



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, meeting room on first floor.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_00014.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 42



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, lounge area on first floor, view to northeast.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0015.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t

Name of Property

Broadwater County, Montana

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs

Page 43



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, meeting room on first floor.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0016.**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21t
Name of Property
Broadwater County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation National Register Photographs Page 44



**Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21, basement assembly room.
MT_BroadwaterCounty_ValleyMasonicLodgeNo21_0017.**









Genie TZ-50

















VALLEY LODGE No. 21
A.F. & A.M.
1947











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

Multiple Name:

State & County: MONTANA, Broadwater

Date Received: 6/24/2019 Date of Pending List: 7/19/2019 Date of 16th Day: 8/5/2019 Date of 45th Day: 8/8/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004236

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept Return Reject 8/7/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 meets National Register Criteria A and C at the local level of significance in the areas of Architecture and Social History. Completed in 1948, the wood-frame lodge building illustrates the basic construction forms typical of post-war construction in the region. Incorporating newly available materials and a simple efficient plan, the building typifies the Minimal Traditional forms associated with period development. As one of the small community's few 1940s era civic projects, the building reflects the evolving patterns of architectural design and fraternal lodge construction in the immediate post war era. The building served as home to the local masonic organization and functioned as an important (and sizable) community social center. The culmination of ongoing efforts by the Valley Lodge to craft a permanent home, the building reflects the status of the longstanding local organization.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 08/07/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**



June 11, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley, Keeper, National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C St., NW - Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley,

Enclosed please find the following nomination for your consideration for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21

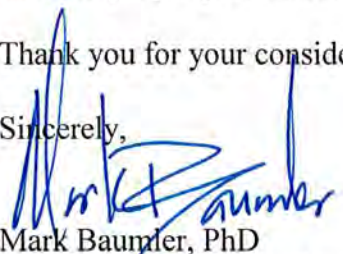
Townsend, Broadwater County, Montana.

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the National Register nomination for the Valley Masonic Lodge No. 21 for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

I notified the owners and public officials in excess of 30 days prior to the Preservation Review Board meeting. The owner concurred with listing the property in the National Register and the Mayor of Townsend supported the nomination. The Review Board unanimously recommended that this property be nominated and I concur with its recommendation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Mark Baumbler, PhD
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure