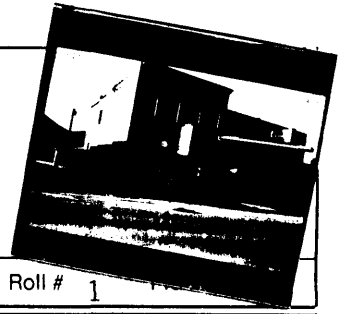


MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

Site # 4



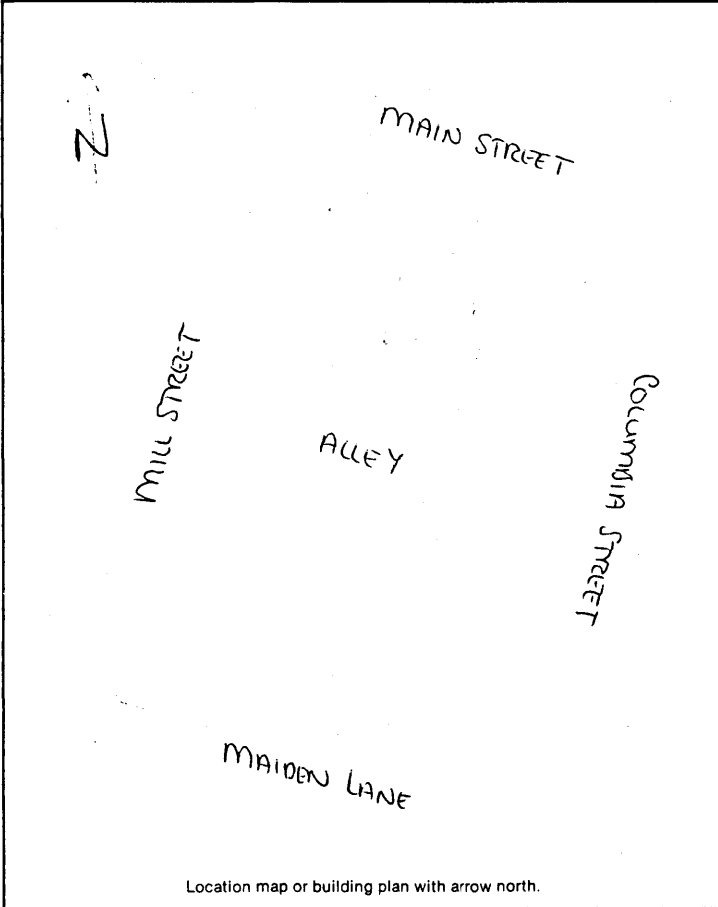
Legal Description: Block 3, lots 3 (west 10 feet), 4 (east 12 feet), and 5 (west 36 feet)

Address: 808 Main Street, Thompson Falls, MT

Ownership: Name: Missoula Motor Parts

private public address: Box 2640, Missoula, MT 59806

Roll # 1



Historic Name: Gem Saloon

Common Name: NAPA Auto Parts

Date of Construction: 1914 estimated documented

Architect: N/A

Builder: Unknown

Original Owner: John Sanfacon

Original Use: saloon/office rentals

Present Use: motor parts store

RESEARCH SOURCES: Note all records consulted to determine dates of construction, original owners, builders, uses, etc.

Abstract of Title: Deedbook: 4, p. 513

Plat Records: Thompson Falls Original Townsite

Tax Records: 1914 Assessment Book

Building Permits: not applicable

Sewer/Water Permits: not applicable

City Directories: Polk, Missoula County: 1915-16, p.

Sanborn Maps: 1914, 1922, 1927

Newspapers: Sanders County Ledger: 4/12/14

Other: _____

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Describe present appearance of structure/site, then contrast and compare that with it's original appearance, noting additions, alterations, and changes in materials. Discuss significant architectural features.

This two-story brick building has a concrete foundation, a full basement, a roof of built-up composition, and a one-story attached brick addition built in 1914. A one-story, wood framed, metal roof, storage and freight loading area was added to the southeast corner in 1981. The original building has a front (south) side of pressed facade. The entryway is recessed and splits two display windows. A boarded-up area to the left of the windows conceal a second story entryway staircase. Separating the two stories is a band of wood coping. Above it stands four doublehung windows. Above it there is a wood cornice, with a blocking course reaching the roof. A sign with the Napa Motor Parts logo juts out over the sidewalk from a metal rod anchored under one of the windows. The building is laid in American bond. The east side has a first floor door and a boarded-up second floor window. The south side features the wood addition and a boarded-up window on the brick one-story addition. The main building has a doorway splitting doublehung windows on the second story. The west wall is common with "FERKS" Restaurant. An interior brick stack is located near the east wall.

Outbuildings shown on the 1927 Sanborn Map no longer exist.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION: Describe the persons, important events, and/or historical patterns associated with the structure/site and surrounding area.

John Sanfacon arrived in Thompson Falls between 1905 and 1906. By 1907, he ran one of the saloons on Main Street. Sanfacon prospered in the coming years. He bought and sold land, built bungalows for rental, became a town alderman, and owned a 1½ story brick residence on Preston Avenue. In 1914, he built this two-story structure to house his Gem Saloon on the first floor and to rent offices on the second. H.O. Bond, a lawyer, became out of his early tenants. At that time the building had eight rooms upstairs, a basement with a street entrance, a barber shop, two pool tables, two public baths, and a restaurant. During prohibition, the barber shop survived along with a cigar and candy store. In the 1930s it became a grocery for a time, with the owner living upstairs. Later on the upstairs was made into apartments. Missoula Motor Parts bought the building in 1982.

Footnote Sources: Deedbooks: 5, p. 48; 4, p. 513; 22, p. 193; 32, p. 261; 34, p. 427; 99, p. 543.
Polk Register, Missoula County: 1907, p. 505; 1915-16, p. 556.
Sanders County Ledger: 4/8/10; 1/16/14; 4/13/14; 4/17/14; 8/21/14.
Interview with "Fat" Brauer by John Lazuk.

INTEGRITY: Assess the degree to which the structure/site, and surrounding area accurately convey the historical associations of the property.

The building retains much of its original integrity. The front appears intact, including the display windows. No major changes appear on the east wall. The west wall was built as a common interest wall with the neighboring property owner. A stairway/walkway which once occupied the space taken by the 1981 south side wood frame addition is the only major loss of integrity.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: Justify how the persons, important events, or historical patterns associated with structure/site lend the property significance and/or describe the ways in which the structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular period, building type, or style.

The Gem Saloon is significant under Criterion A for its contribution to the historical development of Thompson Falls during the most important phase in the community's growth, when the hydroelectric dam project was under construction and the town realized its permanence and stability. It is also significant for its association with John Sanfacon, the original owner and a successful businessman in Thompson Falls during the first quarter of the 20th century. Between 1905-1916 Thompson Falls experienced its first sustained period of growth brought on by the designation of the town as Sanders County seat and the construction of the Thompson Falls Power Company dam between 1912 and 1916. A number of influential people came to Thompson Falls at this time including John Sanfacon, who prospered during the town's boom period and served as a town alderman in 1908. Soon after he arrived in 1905, Sanfacon was involved in numerous real estate transactions, and he also built several Bungalow style residences which served as rental

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: John Lazuk

Address: 350 Strand Avenue, Missoula MT

Date: October 7, 1984

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Acreage: Less than one acre

USGS Quad: Thompson Falls, MT

UTM's: 11/624360/5272325

Significance (cont.)

units to help alleviate the housing shortage caused by the rapid influx of the hydroelectric dam construction workers.

As originally constructed, the Gem Saloon had a barber shop, two pool tables, two public baths and a bar/restaurant on the first floor. The second level had eight rooms which were used as rental offices for a variety of downtown businesses. During prohibition, the barber shop and a cigar and candy store remained open for business. In the mid-to-late 1930s, the building served as a grocery store with the owner living upstairs. Missoula Motor Parts bought the structure in 1982.

Several original commercial brick buildings located on Main Street in Thompson Falls are no longer extant due to fire or new construction. The few buildings that remain today represent well the growth and sense of permanence that Thompson Falls was experiencing in the first two decades of the 20th century. The Gem Saloon retains a high degree of historic architectural integrity in comparison with the other extant commercial buildings in Thompson Falls. The front entrance to the second story offices has been sealed by a plywood panel, as has the transom glass over the storefront plate glass and recessed entry. Although this small amount of historic fabric has been covered, the original design of the building is clearly visible and one can readily understand its historic use.