

MONTANA HISTORICAL/ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY #5.

HISTORIC NAME: Bozeman Sheet Metal Works
ADDRESS: 26 S. Grand, Bozeman
LEGAL BOUNDARY: Story's Addition, Blk B
Lots 10-11
OWNER'S NAME: J & H Office Machines
OWNER ADDRESS: 26 S. Grand, Bozeman
SPECIFIC DATE: 1936
ARCHITECT: Fred F. Willson
BUILDER: Unknown
ORIGINAL OWNER: Frank Hoey
ORIGINAL USE: sheet metal sales
PRESENT USE: office supply store
UTM REFERENCE: 12/496975/5058150
ACREAGE: less than one
U.S.G.S. QUAD: Bozeman, 1953



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
Applicable Criteria: C
Number of Contributing Properties: 1

One of the few exceptional examples of the Streamline Moderne style of architecture in Bozeman, built when the style was first coming into general use during the Great Depression, this striking, black and white building exemplifies the diversity of Bozeman's virtually monopolistic early 20th century architect, Fred F. Willson. The energetic design, as typical of the style, expresses speed and movement through its curved marquee and corner display window, horizontally striped parapet, and, most unusual, the central display window and flanking tiled piers which lean outward toward the sidewalk.

The extensive use of sheet metal in this facade may have been intended to advertise the projects of its original occupant: the Bozeman Sheet Metal Works. That business, owned by Frank E. Hoey, stood to benefit from the starkly modern image this storefront projected, for many of the products it provided, such as heating and ventilating systems, air conditioning, furnaces, refrigerators and gas ranges, in 1936 represented the emergence of a distinctly modern American lifestyle, significantly advanced from the 19th century ways that were still basically predominant. Hoey's business remained at this location into the 1960's, and possibly later. Previous to 1936, it was located across the street at 25 S. Grand.

Fred F. Willson was educated at Columbia University in New York City, and practiced architecture in Bozeman from 1910 to 1956. He secured nearly every major contract in the city during that time, as well as many minor ones. Although examples of his work encompass virtually every style popular during his practice, only two examples of the Streamline Moderne style designed by him remain, the other being the J.C. Penny Building at 23 E. Main. No other historic building in Bozeman, however, is comparable to this one in overall impact, which results from its angularity, contrast, and starkness.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

This small one-story brick commercial structure has a rectangular plan and a flat-roof. The significant part of this building is its interesting Streamline Moderne facade. The

flat, roof awning extension above the front entrance is supported by angled wall extension of the building. There are several large fixed windows set at a projecting angle and curved and clipped corner windows. All windows have raw aluminum frames. The bearing wall construction is finished in brick coursing with a combination of terra cotta coping on the rear. The front section is finished with vertical and horizontally set-grooved sheet metal in black with raw aluminum ribbing at the apron, awning, and parapet levels. The roof supports in front are finished in black glazed tile with white mortar. The entrance is fashioned with curved raw aluminum panels in a vertical ribbed pattern. The door itself is a 2-light aluminum door.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Record of Water Service: New Water Service, Frank Holy Jr., June 17, 1936.

Water Service Renewal: Frank Holy, Jr., 1962

City Directories: 1935-6, p. 38; 1940, p. 34

Fred Willson Job List: 1936, Job # 3610: "Bozeman Sheet Metal Works Shop - Hoey."

FORM PREPARED BY: James R. McDonald, P.C. (1983-84); Matthew Cohen (1985-86 revision); Patricia Bick (1987 revision), State Historic Preservation Office, 225 No. Roberts, Helena, Montana 59620 (406) 444-7715