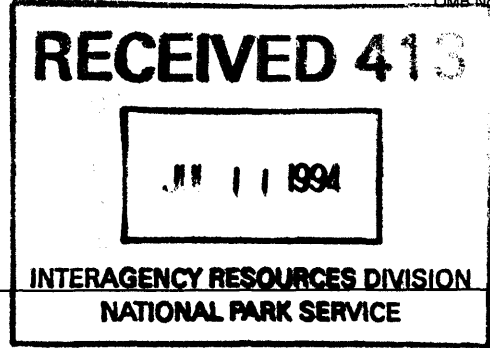


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: Russell School

other name/site number: 24FH

2. Location

street & number: 227 West Nevada Street

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Kalispell

state: Montana code: MT county: Flathead code: 029 zip code: 59901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Maule Shep MT SHPO 6-28-94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 8-24-94

Entered in the National Register

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: private public-local public-State public-Federal

Category of Property: building(s) district site structure object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> building(s)
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Properties of Kalispell, Montana

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:
EDUCATION/school

Current Functions:
EDUCATION/school

7. Description

Architectural Classification:
Moderne

Materials:
foundation: concrete
roof: asphalt
walls: brick
other: n/a

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Russell School is built of tan brick, of wood frame and metal lath construction. The hall floors are covered with linoleum, and the classrooms had hardwood floors and acoustic tile on the ceilings. The original building contained six classrooms, offices and restrooms on the first floor and a boiler room and play room in the basement. According to a 1938 description of the proposed plans:

Interior partitions will be frame with metal lath and plaster; the roof composition, built-up, bonded for ten years; composition floor covering in halls and toilets. Structural designing will be of the latest earthquake resistive type with diagonal and horizontal bracing built to conform to the regulations of the National Board of Fire Underwriters for fire protection. Heating will be by vacuum steam.

Architectural design will be modernistic with cream colored textured stucco relieved by window trim and coping in light blue. The plan is flexible and so arranged as to permit expansion northward. This building with equipment is to cost \$49,775.

After the school was completed, the *Flathead Monitor* described it as follows:

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Section number 7

Russell School

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There is a quiet dignity about this building with its plain cream colored brick surfaces relieved by horizontal lines and base of black vitrified brick. The entrance is massive and clean cut with a contrasting refinement of detail in the chromium grill-work and electroliers.

The materials of construction are solid brick bearing walls, concrete foundation, and frame floors, interior partitions and roof. The interior is finished in a brown and buff color scheme with decorative modernistic stencils in the main vestibule.

Careful consideration was given to sanitation and fire protection. Corridors and toilet rooms have waxed composition floors with sanitary cove bases and fibre board wainscots which are trimmed with chromium moulds. In order to minimize janitor labor, sub-way foot scrapers are installed flush with the concrete slabs at all entrances. An appreciable saving in the cost of construction was effected by the use of recessed metal lockerobes in all class rooms.

...Lawns and sidewalks with gravel playgrounds have been completed, and it is proposed to plant shrubbery, flowers and trees to complete the project and provide the citizens of this community with an educational plant of which they may well be proud.

Original interior features include wood doors and transoms and built-in cabinets. An addition was built onto the school in 1950, two first-grade rooms on the northwest and northeast corners of the building. The two classrooms cost \$21,000. In 1955 a larger addition was built on the east, with an attached gymnasium on its north. This was designed by Brinkman & Lenon and it cost approximately \$94,000. By 1955, a small separate classroom building was located to the north of the main building, in what is now the playground area. The additions (with the exception of the section in the northeast corner of the block) blend well with the original building as they also emphasize the horizontal and are constructed of tan brick.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C	Areas of Significance: Architecture Education
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a	Period(s) of Significance: 1939-1943
Significant Person(s): n/a	Significant Dates: 1939
Cultural Affiliation: n/a	Architect/Builder(s): Brinkman, Fred

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Russell School is a well-preserved example of a Public Works Administration (PWA) project in Kalispell. Built in 1939 in response to overcrowding in Kalispell's grade schools because of a growth in population during the Depression, the one-story brick building originally housed six classrooms, offices, and a basement playroom. It was designed by Kalispell architect Fred Brinkman, and it cost approximately \$50,000 to build. This project, and the construction of a gymnasium and three classrooms near Central School, were funded by a PWA grant and by a school district bond. The building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, Education, and Criterion C, Architecture.

The plans for the Russell School were drawn early in 1938 to fill the need for a school for the many families building residences in the northwest section of Kalispell in the mid-to-late 1930s. During the four years prior to 1938, enrollment in Kalispell's grade schools had increased 30% and the school district was using 5 basement rooms as classroom. This school, and the Linderman School on the East side of Kalispell, were financed under a local-federal grant that was authorized during the Depression. The total came to \$153,700; the school district financed \$82,500 of the total through a bond, and the PWA contributed the rest through a federal grant.

Ground was broken for the new elementary school in the fall of 1938. The school first received students in September of 1939. Architect Fred Brinkman personally inspected all materials used in the construction of the school, and the construction was "under his personal scrutiny." The general contractor was the Lease & Leigland company of Great Falls. The labor, which was local as much as possible, was requisitioned through the local state employment office at wages predetermined by the school district. Much of the work was done during the winter, during the peak of unemployment. The resident PWA engineer was Leo A. Symms, who was the consulting engineer and inspector operating under R. A. Radford of Omaha, Nebraska, the regional director for the PWA. In December of 1938, there were 90 men employed on the two school projects; 79 were from Flathead County. According to Symms, for every two men directly employed on the school project, five other family heads were making a living producing and supplying materials.

In January of 1940, the school was named the Russell School in honor of Charles M. Russell, the Montana cowboy artist who spent his summers at Lake McDonald in Glacier National Park. The *Kalispell Times* commented that it was named for Russell, "a colorful figure with a great love of nature and the ability to sketch and paint the things he saw and loved, and the man who has preserved in colorful picture the story of early Montana and the West." When first built, the school had been known as the Northside School or the North West School.

The school was constructed outside the city limits, so the county had to build the road leading to the school.

The Russell School is one of only a few Art Moderne-style buildings in Kalispell. The horizontal bands in contrasting brick and the ornamental ironwork in the transoms above the front doors are significant architectural features of the building.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Brinkman, Fred, papers and drawings related to Russell School, available at Architects Design Group, Kalispell, Montana.
 Elwood, Henry, *Kalispell, Montana and the Upper Flathead Valley* (Kalispell, MT: Thomas Printing, 1980), pp. 226-27.
Flathead Monitor: "Trustees Want Okay To Buy," April 21, 1938, p. 1; "Propose New School Buildings," June 16, 1938;
 "Work Proceeds Rapidly," December 1, 1938, p. 1; "Kalispell District Receives \$37,000," January 12, 1939, p. 1;
 "Announce Completion of Two New Schools," June 22, 1939, p. 1; "New School Dedication Friday Night,"
 September 14, 1939, p. 1.
Kalispell Times: "Kalispell Schools Rechristened With Names Noted Men," January 11, 1940, p. 1.
 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Kalispell, Montana, 1956.

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government (City of Kalispell)
 University
 Other -- Specify Repository: Flathead County Library,
 Kalispell

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approximately two acres

UTM References:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	11	699160	5342430

Verbal Boundary Description

Tracts 8AB and 8B, Section 7, Township 28 North, Range 21 West, Montana Principal Meridian.

Boundary Justification

The legally recorded boundary of this property encompasses the significant resources.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathy McKay, Historian	date: March 1993
street & number: 491 Eckelberry Dr.	telephone: (406) 892-1538
city or town: Columbia Falls	state: Montana zip code: 59912

Property Owner

name/title: Trustees of School District 5	telephone:
street & number: 233 1st Avenue East	zip code: 59901
city or town: Kalispell	state: MT