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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda

other name/site number:

2. Location

street & number: Corner of Oak and East Third Street

not for publication: n/a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

city/town: Anaconda

state: Montana code: MT county: Deer Lodge code: 023 zip code: 59711

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.)

Maude Sharp 6-17-94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office MT SHPO
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): _____

Entered in the
National Register

for Signature of the Keeper Guymon Rapley Date of Action 7/29/94

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: private	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: Building	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: n/a	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RELIGION: religious facility	Current Functions: RELIGION: religious facility
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7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival	Materials: foundation: stone walls: brick roof: asphalt
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Narrative Description

The United Methodist Church of Anaconda is a striking single story building, built in Gothic Revival style. The main body of the church is cruciform in plan with a high, intersecting gable roof of moderate pitch. A square tower accentuates the southwest corner. Behind the church proper, a single story wing projects to the rear.

Originally constructed in 1890, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda was enlarged and substantially rebuilt in 1897. Retaining the basic massing, walls and primary entrance tucked into the southwest gable junction on the old church, the building was widened, heightened, lengthened and a large tower was added. The church is constructed of common bonded red brick. The brickwork was reinforced in the 1950s along the foundation and lower courses with decorative brick veneer. The roof of the tower is covered with wood shingles; elsewhere, wood shingles on the roof have been replaced with asphalt shingles.

Tall gothic arched windows with hood moldings and set with stained glass grace each elevation. On each primary elevation, the gables of the roof serve to emphasize central elements and to visually balance with the church tower. The gables are buttressed on each corner and enframe primary fenestration. On each elevation this includes a large, central gothic window divided into a lower tripartate band beneath a large circular openings set into the upper arch. These circular openings were reserved for windows, and now house the stained glass "Lowry window" and the Ladies Aid memorial window. Elsewhere, solid wooden panels occupy these circular spaces. Narrow, lanceolate windows on either side balance these large windows.

The tower and steeple on the southwest corner forms the visual focal point of the church. Anchoring the design with solidity and intent of purpose, the steeple atop the tower rises to twice the height of the building. On the lower portion of the tower, diagonal buttresses flank paired gothic and flat arched windows. The upper tower forms an octagonal, set with

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C Areas of Significance: Architecture, Religion

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A Period(s) of Significance: 1890 - 1944

Significant Person(s): n/a Significant Dates: 1890, 1897, 1905

Cultural Affiliation: n/a Architect/Builder: Henry N. Black, architect
Joseph Smith, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Methodist Episcopal Church is one of the earliest orders founded in the community of Anaconda. The church, which was constructed in 1890 and enlarged in 1897 and 1905, has continued service to the present day, its long history mirroring the history of the town. For its associations with the religious history, and the emergence and development of the town of Anaconda it is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The church further qualifies for the Register under Criterion C as an excellent local example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastic architecture, providing a fine showcase for the talents of local architect, Henry N. Black, who practiced in Anaconda at the turn of the 20th century. The Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda meets Criteria exception A for religious properties, since its significance is grounded in its architectural values and historical associations.

Background History

Methodists first came to Montana during the gold rush days of the early 1860s. Reverend Learner Stateler, who came on one of Jim Bridger's wagon trains in July 1864, started preaching at Willow Creek in the fall, and his congregation remains the oldest in Montana. Serving Montanans for 30 years, Stateler helped to start churches from Willow Creek to Corvallis.¹

One of the first to visit the rough and tumble mining camps was Brother William Florkey, who delivered sermons in Virginia City and held Bible classes throughout the winter of 1863. In the summer of 1864, a few more preachers came to Montana, but the majority left because they were not prepared for the hardships they were forced to endure.² Reverend J.W. Craig arrived from Oregon and delivered his first sermon the day Henry Plummer was hanged, 10 January 1864.³

The first Methodist superintendent in Montana, Reverend A.M Hough, arrived in Virginia City in October 1864. Hough was surprised to discover ministers and lay people had already laid the mission groundwork and that a church had been built recently. After gold was discovered at Last Chance Gulch, the miners of Virginia City moved to Helena, and Hough sent Reverend T. E. McLaughlin to examine the conditions there. Sermons and Sunday School classes were held in homes until a church was built, and as the mining population shifted to Helena the Houghs followed.⁴

Hough worked to bring other pastors to Montana, and with the territorial population growing, congregations soon outgrew their churches. Adept at financial dealings with bankers and merchants, Hough financed and built many churches, along with organizing Sunday Schools and parsonages before he and his wife left Montana due to her failing health.⁵

See continuation sheets

¹Small, Lawrence F. "Methodism in Montana." in *Religion in Montana. Pathways to the Present. Volume One*. Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana. 1992. pp. 137-138.

²Small. pp 87-90.

³Small. pp. 81.

⁴Small. pp. 91-95.

⁵Small. pp. 95, 136.

Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda
Name of Property

DeerLodge, Montana
County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

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
 University
 Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References: **Zone** **Easting** **Northing**
 12 349320 5109940

Legal Location: NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 3, T4N, R11W.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda is located on lots 7-9 in Block 37 of the Original Townsite, Anaconda, Montana.

Boundary Justification

These are the lots that have been associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda since its founding in 1883, the year the town was platted.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Carol Zottnick and Chere Justo
organization: Montana State Historic Preservation Office date: January 1994
street & number: 1410 8th Avenue telephone: 406-444-7715
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59620

Property Owner

name: First Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda
street & number: Corner of Oak and East Third Street
city or town: Anaconda state: MT zip code: 59711

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gothic, louvered vents. The tower is crowned by an octagonal steeple with gablets adorning the base and capped by a gold cross.

The tower shelters the main entrance, which is recessed in the west wall of the church. The roof flares at the eaves to cover the entrance, which was originally cloistered under a wooden gothic archway (removed at an unknown date). An octagonal bay defines the northwest corner of the church proper, and echoes the rhythms of the steeple.

In 1905, the church building was again enlarged, this time to add space at the rear for other church functions. Three rooms were added: a social room, a church parlor and a kitchen. On the exterior, this addition extends to the rear behind the church proper, and is lower in height. An octagonal bay fully spans the addition's west side, framing a pair of hooded, gothic windows. Dormers in the eave of the hip roof accentuate these windows and a secondary entrance. The entrance features paired wooden doors under a gothic-arched transom.

Historically, a two story brick building stood adjacent to the church along the north side. Today, a brick bearing wall lines the north elevation of the church, a vestige of the historic building next door which was demolished.

On the interior, the church remains true to its historic design. The nave sits under a modified barrel vault, and includes a center aisle and two flanking rows of wooden pews. Heavy, carved and panelled woodwork trims the walls and the apse. A huge pipe organ, installed in 1905, rises behind the altar.

Integrity

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda exhibits excellent retention of historic integrity, both on the exterior and interior. The only element marring the original design of the building is the apron of decorative brick veneer. However, this detracts little from the ability of the church to reflect its historic design and purpose. A strong architectural anchor in this historic town, it provides an excellent example of local Gothic design.

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Circuit riders were central to early Methodism in Montana. Following in the footsteps of John Wesley, who established this practice in England in the 1700s, the ministers traveled to small communities and gave a sermon or two before moving on to another location. Traveling lightly, usually only with their Bible, clothes, a hymnal and a horse, the daily lives of the circuit riders were rigorous. They sometimes preached two or three times a day, bringing their message to even the most far flung communities. Their main goal was to establish small, consistent groups who would grow spiritually and maintain Sunday sermons. Once these groups coalesced and grew, a church congregation would be organized and a church would be built.

A primitivist denomination, Methodism had a prominent place in Montana. Preaching a core ideology of human potential, the circuit riders persisted as late as the 1920s in rural Montana. In the later years, cars replaced horses and preachers were able to travel more miles and meet with more people, helping to overcome Montana's large distances and low populations.⁶

Two important men in the early church years were Reverend F.A. Riggin and "Brother Van" Orsdel who were commissioned at the Second Rocky Mountain Conference in Salt Lake City in 1873. Riggin and Van Orsdel were assigned to the circuit region of the Beaverhead-Jefferson, and the territory covered a substantial amount of southwestern Montana. Riggin was one of the first well educated men to come to Montana. He was an ordained minister and had earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees at Dickinson College, and he was commissioned to preach when he was a sophomore in college. Brother Van, while not as educated as Riggin, possessed an "innate goodwill of spirits that would make him one of the most beloved preachers in Montana."⁷ They met and joined together and became an inimitable force for Methodism in Montana. Along with their ministering, they worked to establish hospitals and schools, helping to move Montana beyond the frontier period. Such important institutions as the Montana Deaconess School and Montana Wesleyan College in Helena, Rocky Mountain College in Billings and the Deaconess Hospital in Great Falls are part of the Methodist legacy in Montana.

Women played an important role in the establishment of the Methodist church in Montana, and most churches would not have survived without their contributions. Once a congregation was formed, Ladies Aid Societies sprang up almost immediately. The Societies helped to finance the church and sometimes bore the majority of the financial burden to keep the church alive. They held bake sales, Christmas bazaars suppers and various "innocent entertainments." The women also provided old furniture to furnish the parsonages for the minister's family.

To help with the ministry, pastors relied heavily upon their wives, who often spent long amounts of time alone, cared for children in their absences and went without material items that would have made life more comfortable. They accepted the routine five-year move to another congregation, and were constantly forced to pull up stakes and replant their families at another location.

The church also relied heavily on women to staff hospitals and schools. Their training was thorough, and they received religious instruction as well. Some women longed to preach to a congregation. In 1919, Belle C. Harmon was ordained as a deacon and she trained as a traveling preacher to become the first woman circuit rider. Although women like Harmon

⁶Fogde, Myron Jean. "Protestantism Follows the Frontier." *Religion in Montana. Pathways to the Present. Volume One.* Lawrence F. Small. Ed. Rocky Mountain College. Billings, Montana. 1992. pp. 111.

⁷Small. pp 138.

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served small towns and administered the sacraments, they were not completely accepted nor admitted to the Conference until 1956 when Reverend Ellen H. Rose achieved full ordination status.⁸

Montana was settled during the Civil War period, when a split existed in the Methodist Church over the issue of slavery. The northern Methodists violently opposed slavery while the southern church believed slavery should be maintained. Both churches attempted to settle in the new territories of the west. In Montana, the northern church was more successful, although Southern sympathies ran strong among the mining communities.⁹ It wasn't until 1938 that the rift was healed and the Methodist Church reunited.¹⁰

Through the years, Montana's distances and sparse population made it difficult for congregations to remain intact and stable. People lived so far apart, it was difficult for the fledgling towns to create the feeling of community. Also rapidly changing economic conditions resulted in transient populations throughout Montana's history and contributed to the financial difficulties of maintaining a church and a pastor's salary.

Despite these difficulties, many communities were able to build congregations. A significant population factor that helped the stability of towns was the fact that Montana's new homesteading population included large numbers of women. Also, many non-denominational people contributed to building churches because they thought a church would be a positive attribute for other new settlers. Railroad and townsite platting companies donated lots for churches if they could be built by a certain date.¹¹ The Methodists were quick to respond to these rapid population changes, and they received 140 ministerial appointments in Montana by 1907.¹²

Through the early 20th century, the state's boom and bust cycles left their mark on Montana churches whose fortunes were directly tied to the health of the economy and levels of population. Churches proliferated during the mining booms of the late 1800s, through early statehood and beyond the turn of the century through the homesteading era, then were hit hard by the homestead bust, droughts and depression which followed World War I. Montana congregations shriveled almost overnight when approximately 60,000 people moved from the state. Through the decades that followed, the state never regained its initial momentum and maintaining churches in this sparsely populated state has remained an ongoing challenge.¹³

Church History: Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda

The first known religious services in the Anaconda vicinity took place in 1874, long before the town was settled. Renowned Methodist circuit rider, Reverend W.W. Van Orsdel led a service in a rural log school house. Three years later, F. A. Riggin conducted services at the Peter Levengood ranch, two miles west of the future townsite.

⁸Small. pp. 151-164.

⁹Fogde. pp 112.

¹⁰Small. pp. 162-163.

¹¹Fogde. pp. 113-114.

¹²Small. pp. 147.

¹³Small. pp. 161.

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The town of Anaconda was established by Marcus Daly, Butte copper baron, in 1883, as a smelter site for the processing of ores from his mines in Butte. Daly erected the world's largest smelter at the time, and imported furnace and mill workers from such renowned mining centers as Michigan and Wales. To serve the new community and its industrial interests, he also created the Butte, Anaconda & Pacific Railroad, the Daly Bank & Trust Company, and the Anaconda Standard newspaper.

Upon founding of the town of Anaconda in 1883, two churches became the first to serve the community. In the summer of 1884, the new Anaconda Weekly Review reported that "Two churches it is positively known, will be constructed here during the summer, the Christian and the Methodist Episcopal Church South ministers having made arrangements to that end... The Methodist Church South has also sent for plans and specifications for a brick church 28 x 45 feet in size and contractors are now preparing bids for the construction. The contract for building will be let at once."¹⁴

The Christian church was a frame building erected on the corner of Cherry and Second (later Park) Streets. The Methodist Episcopal Church South was built west of the Montana Hotel on Park Street. These two churches known locally as the "frame church" and the "brick church" also were used by other congregations for the first six years of Anaconda's existence.

E.J. Stanley was the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, but it did not flourish and its membership was absorbed into the Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁵ Rev. J.W. Bennett and John Hosking, Methodists riding the Butte circuit, occasionally preached at these churches. At the town's platting in 1883, circuit rider F.A. Riggin also applied for and received three lots, on the corner of Third and Oak Streets, to build a church although that plan was several years in the making.¹⁶ Rev. E.A. Stickleman was the first Methodist Episcopal minister appointed to Anaconda, in 1885. Stickleman served for six months, during which time a two-room frame building was erected on the site of the present parsonage. Stickleman and his successor gave sermons in the front room of that parsonage and slept in the back room. The rickety building left the church members cold and almost unprotected from the elements.

When Philip Lowry arrived in 1889, he pulled the ten members of the congregation together, bolstering the Anaconda Methodists both spiritually and financially. When he left more than 100 people had joined the church. Lowry raised \$300 for improvements and garnered \$100 from the School Board for their use of church property.¹⁷ He also convinced Copper King Marcus Daly to donate \$100 and the bricks for the church at cost, a valuable contribution at a time when bricks were expensive and scarce.¹⁸ The new church, free from debt, was dedicated on 14 December 1890.¹⁹

By the latter 1890s the church congregation was bulging. Between 1896 and 1899 alone, during the tenure of W.T. Euster, the church membership grew by 553 members. In 1897, the deacons decided to build a major addition to the church. Architect Henry N. Black was hired to draw the plans for the addition of 25 feet on the north end, two alcoves, an organ

¹⁴Geil, M. *All Things Considered*, p. 1

¹⁵Mills. pp. 203.

¹⁶Geil, Marian. *National Register Workbook*. Unpublished and held at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office. 1993. pp. 4.

¹⁷Mills. pp. 203.

¹⁸Geil. p. 17a.

¹⁹Dolan, Mary. *Anaconda Memorabilia. 1883-1983*. Acme Press. Missoula, Montana. 1983. pp. 41. and Geil. pp. 18.

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loft, a vestry, a choir balcony, a pulpit platform, and communion table or altar. Joseph Smith, a carpenter and building contractor listed in Anaconda directories during the 1890s, was the builder. The renovations cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000. A new tower was added, and the Sunday School purchased an 800 pound bell to ring in the steeple. A large pipe organ was installed. Miller shutters were built between the classroom and main auditorium so they could be opened for more seating space. The deacons ordered a new Peninsular hot air furnace to ease the janitor's work of heating the church. The Philip Lowry Memorial window was added at the rear of the auditorium, and another window of equal beauty was dedicated to the Ladies Aid Society. Bishop Cranston traveled from Helena and delivered the dedication sermon on 22 August 1897.²⁰

The years of Euster's leadership were active in Anaconda. In 1897 when the church was dedicated, forest fires raged west of town for almost a week, and miners were emigrating to Alaska hoping to strike gold. Reverend Euster delivered sermons that discussed Cuba and Spain, and Anaconda's Spanish-American war volunteers left on 4 May 1898. Also, Phoebe Hearst visited the library building she sponsored on 11 June 1898.²¹

Daly and W.C. Hoge, a local banker, made general donations to the church.²² A letter read at the Second General Conference from Mrs. Daly promised to "look into the subsidy of \$250 made by her husband before his death, on payment of the church debt."²³ In 1897-98, Hoge built a parsonage for the church as a memorial for his wife, heralded by many as the nicest parsonage in Montana.

Another addition to the rear of the church was completed in 1905 during I.S. Ware's tenure in Anaconda. Three rooms were built, and the largest was used for socials, Ladies Aid meetings and small Sunday School classes. One of the small rooms was used exclusively by the ladies, and the other was a kitchen with a "good range and all the necessary cooking utensils and dishes for the preparation of coffee and good, warm meals."²⁴ The old furnace was replaced with a new steam boiler system.²⁵

In 1909 during the year of the Silver Jubilee, Euster and the congregation ceremonially "burned the note" and declared the church debt free. Euster commented "These were the halcyon days of Anaconda when Marcus Daly reigned supreme and hopes were rife that the state capital might yet be located here." This era was probably the most exciting and vibrant period for Anaconda and the church.²⁶

²⁰*Anaconda Standard, The.* Anaconda, Montana. 4 February 1897, 21 April 1897, 2 June 1897, 18 August 1897, 23 August and 1897.

²¹*Geil.* pp. 18.

²²*Whithorn.* pp. 2-2.

²³*Geil.* pp. 17a.

²⁴*Anaconda Standard.* 3 November 1905.

²⁵*Anaconda Standard.* 3 November 1905.

²⁶*Geil.* pp. 18.

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Architectural Significance

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda is a fine example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical design. Building upon a previously existing edifice, architect H.N. Black retained some of the feeling of that earlier Gothic building, retaining but expanding many elements central to Gothic style, including the pointed arch and lanceolate windows, the cruciform massing, high, steeply-pitched rooflines and focal tower.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Anaconda gains significance as an example of the work of local architect, Henry Nelson Black. Black was born in Massachusetts and educated at the Boston School of Technology and Harvard University. He worked as a foreman with the architectural department of Bryant and Rogers in Boston for five years, and later formed a partnership with his former employer, Mr. Bryant. Black ran a branch office in New Brunswick, remaining in the province after the partnership dissolved. He then served under the New Brunswick provincial attorney general, as well as designing churches, dwellings and other buildings. Black later designed numerous buildings in Woodstock and in Eastport Main, following fires there.

In 1895, H.N. Black came to Montana as a competitor for designing a new State capitol, and located in Anaconda. While in Anaconda, he built several schoolhouses, many business blocks, a number of private dwellings and the Methodist Episcopal Church. He also remodelled city hall and erected an annex to the State Insane Asylum. He opened a branch office in Great Falls in 1902, where he designed the Great Falls Methodist Episcopal church and was the supervising architect for the Cascade County Courthouse. The Great Falls Church was demolished during the 1950s, and the Anaconda Methodist Episcopal Church survives to represent Black's facility with ecclesiastical architecture.

The Methodist Church has long been an integral part of the landscape and the community, serving the people of Anaconda almost as long as the town has existed. The Anaconda Company closed its operations in Anaconda in 1979, yet the Methodist church, like many resident of the town, survives, proud of the close knit community it serves and the long history it represents.

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- Progressive Men of Montana, p. 999-1000