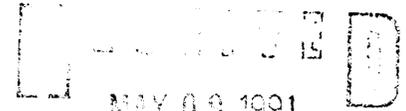


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Thornton Hospital

other name/site number: Stevensville Rest Home

2. Location

street & number: 107 East Third Street

not for publication: n/a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

city/town: Stevensville

state: Montana code: MT county: Ravalli code: 081 zip code: 59870

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

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

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

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Stevensville, Montana: 1866-1941.

4. 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.

Maude J. DePuy MTHPO 9-9-91
Signature of certifying official Date

MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and 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

__ See Continuation Sheet

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

entered in the National Register McLaurie Byrum 6/19/91

See Continuation Sheet

determined eligible for the National Register _____

determined not eligible for the National Register _____

See Continuation Sheet

removed from the National Register _____

See Continuation Sheet

other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Health care/hospital

Current: Vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival

Materials: foundation: concrete
 walls: brick
 roof: asphalt shingles
 other:

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Thornton Hospital is a 2½-story, Classical Revival style building. The hospital is a rectangular mass, covered with a hipped roof. The building is veneered with brick and set upon a poured concrete foundation. Basically symmetrical in design, the hospital is an imposing building. The design incorporates a veranda-like porch with balcony above that wraps two sides of the building on the first and second stories, supported by equidistant Tuscan columns. On the upper story, symmetrically-placed hipped dormers add interest above the planes of the roof line. The dormers are sided with clapboard and house paired, double-hung windows. Dormers on the east and west elevations are emphasized by short brick chimneys attached to the north side of each dormer.

Fenestration throughout is characterized by double-hung, 1-over-1 windows. On the first and second stories, windows are set under brick relieving arches, over concrete sills. On the main body of the building, first and second floor openings correspond to one another. The basement windows match the upper half of the main and second floor windows.

Originally, a spindled balustrade surrounded the porch and balcony, as well as the stairways accessing the first floor. However, after conversion to a rest home in 1939, these elements were rebuilt and, currently, the main floor porch is enclosed by a wrought iron railing, and the uncovered second floor balcony is enclosed by a 2 x 4 wooden railing. The masonry exterior of the hospital has been sprayed with a textured paint (red with green trim), and asphalt composition shingles have replaced original wooden shingles.

When Thornton Hospital opened in 1910, the Northwest Tribune described the interior:

The hospital is a seventeen room building and two and a half stories in height. The second story is confined to the operating department and rooms for patients, and the upper will be exclusively patients' rooms, while the first story of the building is used for Dr. Thornton's office, which is in the front of the building on the east side. The west side and the rear are used for the living rooms of the Thornton family. The building is 36 x 66 feet and faces north. Under the building is a basement the full size of the building. The building is equipped with an elevator, which goes from the basement to the top story.

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The operation department is located on the southeast corner of the second story and the southwest corner is used as a sterilizing room, a dispensary, drug storage and the surgical dressing room. It has recently been equipped with a pressure sterilizer, and in this and the operating department, everything is provided for prompt attendance. The operating room will soon be equipped with a photo X-Ray machine.¹

The principal facade (north) faces Third Street, and features a central doorway on the first and second stories onto the porch. Openings are arranged symmetrically, with transoms above the doors. Windows are placed to either side of each doorway. The central focus on this elevation is accented by a single hipped dormer centered above the doorways. The original entrance door on the main floor has been replaced with a modern glass doors. A fiberglass canopy, supported by wrought iron posts, now covers the main entry stairs. Originally, the stairs led straight down to the sidewalk, these have been replaced with stairs which rise from the east to porch level. A wheel chair ramp, also covered by a fiberglass roof on wrought iron supports leads up to the porch on the east elevation. The second story porch entry also has a new door, and the brick work at the entry has been modified to allow for wheelchair width egress.

The southeast quarter of the porch is enclosed with 8-over-8 sash windows, set over clapboard siding. A wooden fire escape has been added from the main floor through the porch roof. Two hipped dormers are symmetrically placed on the upper level. A second wooden fire escape has been added from the south dormer to the second floor porch; the original short chimney adjacent to this dormer has been removed.

On the south elevation, double-hung windows are placed asymmetrically, singly or in pairs. At the center of the second story, a fire door opens onto a steel fire escape, descending to ground level. Three half windows light the basement. A large brick interior chimney is centrally located in the roof.

On the west elevation, a single-story sun porch was enlarged in 1928 by joining an original frame bay at the center with an original small brick bay at the southwest corner. The brick bay has two small, fixed single-pane windows, located high on the wall, and a third located at the center, on ground level. The remainder of the ell is clapboard-covered with a central pair of double-hung, 1-over-1 windows and a single window in the south end.

An underground garage is located beneath the sun porch with the entrance ramp ascending from the north. The sill treatment of two ground level windows indicates that the underground garage was an original feature. On the second story, a series of six windows are placed irregularly in the wall. Twin dormers like those on the east were joined in

¹Northwest Tribune, April 4, 1911.

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1928 by adding a central 1-over-1 window to make one large, single dormer, and removing the small brick chimney located adjacent to the south dormer.

Despite the major alterations this building has experienced, including replacement of many doors with modern units, the addition of the incompatible wrought iron supports and balustrade on the porch, and the highly intrusive fiberglass covered ramp and steps on the two primary elevations to the east and north, the Thornton Hospital retains a high degree of design and material integrity. All of the above noted changes are relatively easy to reverse.

The 1928 remodel of the west dormer and sun porch is a small change in the overall facade, and it dates within the period of significance for the hospital.

Outbuilding

A two-car garage was built directly south of the hospital in 1948.² The wood-framed garage has a poured concrete floor, shingle siding, and a gabled roof running east/west. There is also a concrete slab extending across the south end of the hospital. It appears to have been covered at one time. The garage does not contribute to the historical significance of the hospital.

²Tax Records.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, B, C Areas of Significance: Architecture, Health Care

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a Period(s) of Significance: 1910-1940

Significant Person(s): Dr. William T. Thornton Significant Dates: 1910, 1917, 1928

Cultural Affiliation: n/a Architect/Builder: W. R. Rodgers, builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Thornton Hospital is a building of considerable local significance. It is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its associations with the growth and development of medical facilities in western Montana during the 20th century. It gains significance for its important associations with Dr. William Thornton, a physician who founded several hospitals in western Montana. Furthermore, the hospital is an excellent example of Classical Revival architecture of the early 20th century.

The Thornton Hospital, in its original form, exhibits the symmetry and simplicity of a Classical building. The simple lines, hip roof, dormers, segmental arched windows, and wrap around veranda with its classical Tuscan columns, is typical of Neo-Classical architecture throughout the Intermountain West. No doubt the simple grace and elegance of this style building, constructed by local craftsmen from locally manufactured materials, embodied the American pioneer's ideal of architectural beauty.

The Thornton Hospital was constructed during an era of optimism in Montana, and was the only hospital in the Bitterroot Valley at that time. The facility was primarily a surgical hospital, providing the rural area with up-to-date medical services found in very few communities of this size. This private hospital reflected the community's pride in itself, and was a concrete symbol of shared hopes for future growth and development. Its later history also reveals the theme of community loss in rural America as medical and other specialized services became concentrated in urban centers during the later half of the twentieth century. The hospital, a landmark facility for Stevensville in 1910, could not compete in the age of specialized medical services after World War II.

Dr. William Thornton was responsible for building the Thornton Hospital, at that time a state of the art facility. Subsequently, William Thornton, with his brother Dr. Charles Thornton, built two hospitals in Missoula, the larger becoming Missoula Community Hospital. During the 1970s, Missoula Community Hospital moved to new and larger facilities at Fort Missoula, and has evolved to become a major medical center in western Montana. Dr. William Thornton devoted much of his lifetime and career to improving the quality of health care in western Montana. Through his endeavors to establish high quality hospital facilities in Stevensville and Missoula, he made an indelible stamp on the quality of medical care in western Montana.

In May 1907, Dr. William T. Thornton moved from Chicago to Stevensville to begin his practice. His brother was already a practicing physician in Corvallis, and he was a

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friend of Dr. Karl Kellogg of Stevensville. Thornton rented an office in the May Building, and moved, with his wife, into the Allen Forkner residence.³

In the fall of 1908, Dr. Thornton built a new office at 221 Main Street.⁴ Two years later he purchased two lots at the corner of Third and Church Streets and made plans for a hospital. Excavation for the Thornton Hospital began in March 1910. In May, W. R. Rodgers began manufacturing the brick and cast concrete blocks for the hospital. By the fall of 1910, the hospital was completed.⁵ The Thornton family moved into the hospital living quarters in August, 1910.⁶ The Hospital opened for business in November, 1910.⁷

In 1917, Thornton sold the hospital to Dr. P. S. Rennick, and joined his brother in Missoula, where they built two hospitals. One of them, located on Front Street, became Missoula Community Hospital. The original building was torn down in 1974 to make space for Missoula Public Library.⁸

Dr. Rennick was responsible for remodelling the Thornton Hospital in 1928 by enlarging the sun porch on the west side and altering the west dormers.⁹ Rennick operated the hospital until his death, after which the hospital became a rest home.

³Stevensville Register, May 16, 1907.

⁴Stevensville Register, September 3, 1908; October 8, 1908.

⁵Stevensville Register, March 17, 1910; May 12, 1910.

⁶Stevensville Register, August 25, 1910.

⁷Northwest Tribune, April 14, 1911.

⁸Stevensville Historical Society, Montana Genesis, (Missoula Mountain Press, 1971, pp. 173-174.

⁹Northwest Tribune, April 12, 1928.

9. References

Abstract of Title, Stevensville Townsite, Block 22, Lots 1-3.
Missoula Herald, Missoula, Montana, Special Edition, January 1, 1909.
Missoulian, Missoula, Montana, December 15, 1912; June 12, 1949; August 14, 1949.
Northwest Tribune, April 4 & 14, 1911; April 12, 1928.
Sanborn Map Company, Ltd., "Map of Stevensville, Montana", 1909, 1927 (New York).
Stevensville Historical Society, Montana Genesis (Missoula: Mountain Press, 1971).
Stevensville Register, Stevensville, Montana, May 16, 1907; September 3, 1908; October 8, 1908; Special Edition, December 23, 1909; March 17, 1910; May 12, 1910.
U.S. Commerce Department, Twelfth U.S. Census, 1910, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
Western News, Hamilton, Montana, December 19, 1911.

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
	11	722130	5154560

Verbal Boundary Description:

Stevensville Townsite, Block 22, Lots 1 - 3.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the lots upon which the historic building is situated.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Frank Grant	Date: revised October 1990
Street & Number: 544 Hastings	Telephone: 406/549-2468
City or Town: Missoula State: Montana	Zip: 59801