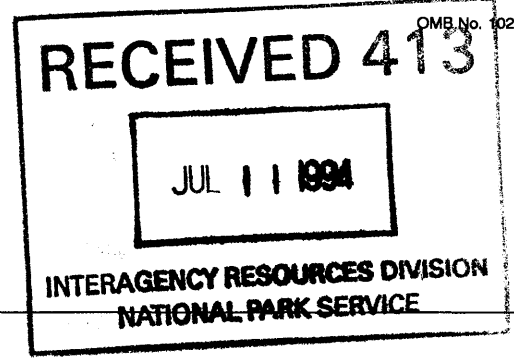


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: Continental Oil Company Filling Station

other name/site number: Conoco Gas Station 24FH

2. Location

street & number: 35 First Avenue North

not for publication: n/a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 Day 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): _____

for
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall 5-24-94

Entered in the
National Register

5. Classification

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

Category of Property: X 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:
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions:
COMMERCE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification:
Tudor Revival

Materials:
foundation: CONCRETE
roof: WOOD: shingle
walls: BRICK
other: N/A

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Continental Oil Company Filling Station is an excellent example of a domestic-style filling station popular in the 1920s and 1930s, and it is the only example of this type in Kalispell. The Tudor-style building has a brick veneer and a steeply pitched gabled roof covered with wood shingles. The lower ends of the roof are slightly flared. Part of the south elevation has been sided in diagonal wood siding, covering two garage bays. The windows are six- and twelve-light metal units, with some picture windows, with brick sills and lintels. The windows in the gable ends are very narrow. The entry on the south has half-timbering below the window and decorative patterned bricks. The floor of the building is concrete throughout, and the walls are also concrete. The door on the west has vertical wide boards and iron strap hinges. Above the door on the south, now the main entrance, one can still see the outline where the letters CONOCO used to be mounted. The building probably represents a corporate design of the period; several visitors to the building have commented that the design is identical to other filling stations they have seen. The concrete construction, however, indicates that it probably was not prefabricated and shipped to Kalispell.

The restroom in the northwest corner of the building features original green and black tiles on the walls and a sink that appears to be original. Another restroom located to the north of this one has an exterior entrance; this one was probably originally the women's room, as typically a filling station in the 1930s would have the men's room on the inside (closer to the employees) and the women's room "discreetly located" away from most of the traffic. The office/waiting area of the filling station was located in the southwest corner of the building, and there was a safe in the floor of that room that has since been removed. A hole in the ceiling led to a storage area.

The lots to the north of the filling station have always been vacant. During the West Hotel era beginning in the 1890s, the grounds north of the hotel were flooded to create an ice skating rink.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Transportation

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: ca.1932-1943

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: ca.1932

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder(s): unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Continental Oil Company Filling Station is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, Architecture. Built ca. 1932 as a filling station, it is representative of filling stations of that era that were designed to resemble residences. The building was Station No. 1 of the Continental Oil Company in Kalispell for many years; it was owned by the company until 1964. Today it houses a travel agency. The building is also eligible for listing under Criterion A, as it reflects the evolution of transportation and automobile-related businesses in Kalispell.

The site was originally occupied by the West Hotel, long a landmark in Kalispell. Built in 1891 by Frank Morgan before the Great Northern Railway even reached the new town of Kalispell, the West Hotel was a three-story structure located just one block from the railroad depot (see attached photographs). The hotel was demolished by the Kirkpatrick Brothers, contractors, in 1921 in preparation for the Continental Oil Company's new service station. The corner location was considered "the exact center of activity" in the 1890s. In later years 1st Avenue East became the transportation corridor, providing first liveries and feed stables and blacksmiths, gradually shifting to bicycle repair shops, automobile repair shops, new and used car dealers, and filling stations supplying gasoline and oil to automobile travelers.

In 1921 the Continental Oil Company, which had been distributing oils in the Flathead Valley since at least 1901, purchased two sites in Kalispell for service stations. One was this corner, the other was the northeast corner of Main Street and 5th Street. According to manager Adolph Anderson, the company planned to ship glass and iron to Kalispell and construct the station in a standard design.

The original Continental Oil Company filling station on this lot was a very small structure that had an extended porch over the gas islands. Competition with other filling stations may have led the Continental Oil Company to rebuild the station (some time between 1927 and 1937), giving it its present appearance. In 1935, for example, there were 23 service stations in Kalispell alone. Other gas stations adopted novel advertising techniques. In 1926, for instance, the Reliance Refinery gas station diagonally across the street from the Continental Oil Company station introduced an attention-grabbing advertising stunt that the *Flathead Monitor* described as follows:

It is a miniature aeroplane which extends over the walk from the top of the building and moves from First avenue to First street. The plane is running continuously and is supposed to be operated by the high grade gas handled by the station. Colored electric lights are strung along the moving arm to which the plane is attached and presents a most attractive appearance.

The existing station was constructed by 1937, when the *Kalispell Times* referred to it as the service station housed in "the attractive colonial cottage." In 1936 Morris Blake was an attendant at the station. From approximately 1930 until 1936 the station was called the Flathead Motor Sales Company station (that auto dealership was located across 1st Avenue East from the station). By 1937 Blake and his partner Alvin Held had leased the station from the Continental Oil Company. Three years later, Blake was a state highway patrolman and Held no longer lived in Kalispell.

The Continental Oil Company Filling Station was used by the company (later known as Conoco) until approximately 1974. Today the building is occupied by a travel agency.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Divita, Marsha (current owner), interview with Kathy McKay, May 19, 1993.
Flathead Monitor: March 31, 1921, p. 5; "One by One Old Landmarks Go in the Discard," April 9, 1925, p. 1; June 17, 1926.
 Jakle, John A., "The America Gasoline Station, 1920 to 1970," *Journal of American Culture* (spring 1978), pp. 524-529.
Kalispell Bee: December 8, 1903, p. 8.
Kalispell Times: "West Hotel, Built at Kalispell in 1891," March 3, 1921; April 28, 1921; December 19, 1935; November 4, 1937.
 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Kalispell, Montana, 1910, 1927, 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: less than one acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	11	699820	5341590

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 37, lots 7-8, 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: May 1993
street & number: 491 Eckelberry Dr.	telephone: (406) 892-1538
city or town: Columbia Falls	state: Montana zip code: 59912

Property Owner

name: Marsha K. Divita
 street & number: 775 North Main Street
 city or town: Kalispell state: MT zip code: 59901