

Site #

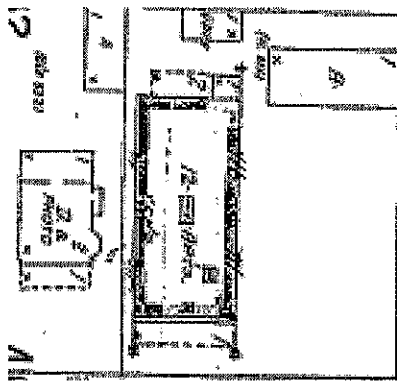
MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

Legal Description: KNOWLES #1-LOT 11 BLK 32

Address: 508 South 3rd West, Missoula, Montana 59801

Ownership Name: HANSEN STELLA J AND TOBY AND KEITH

☒ private ☐ public Address: 425 S ORANGE ST, MISSOULA, MT, 59801



508

This illustration has been taken from the 1958 digital Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Missoula, Montana.



Location map or building plan with arrow north

Historic Name: Thornton Hospital/Apartments

Common Name: Thornton Apartments

Date of Construction: 1909

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Original Owner: Unknown

Original Use: Apartments

Present Use: Apartments

RESEARCH SOURCES: Note all records consulted to determine dates of construction, original owners, builders, uses, etc.

Title Search:

Tax Records:

Bldg. Permit:

Census Record: x

Sewer/Water: x

Sanborn Maps: x

Directories: x

Newspapers: x

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Missoula County Polk Directory collection (1901-1980) published by R. L. Polk & Co. of Montana; Missoula, MT. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map collection—Missoula County Office of Planning & Grants microfiche that includes maps from 1891-1958 with a revised 1969 map; and the Sanborn digital collection: 1891-1958 (used with permission from Sanborn Map Company Inc.); Missoula County Engineering Office property database; Fourteenth Census Of The United State—Precinct 10, Missoula County, Montana; The Daily Missoulian, January 2, 1909: 9.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Describe present appearance of the structure/site, then contrast and compare that with its original appearance, noting additions, alterations and changes in materials. Discuss significant architectural features.

This apartment building is a wood frame, brick vaneer, three story + basement flat roofed building with basement. The windows and doors are symmetrical on all sides of the building. Cement steps lead to a full length poured cement porch pad. The porch is open or unrailed, and the roof is flat, serving as a full-length second story balcony. The second story balcony is railed in balustrade. This balcony is supported in part by four square columns resting on the main level porch pad. The front entry is centered, and the door is wood with an oval glass pane centrally located. Three lights directly above the door, and one long narrow light on either side of the door, surround the entry. The three panes above the door and one of the sidelights are decoratively etched. A large fixed window is located on either side of the entry. Above, the second level houses the same entry, door and light pattern, with all of the lights appearing to be etched. A 1/1 double hung window is housed on either side of the second level balcony door. The south face of the third story houses three 1/1 double hung windows and a small steel balcony/fire escape. The west face of the building houses six 1/1 double hung windows on each level, and all of the windows are accented with arched vertical brick detailing above. The east face of the building houses an entry located below ground level in a cement well. Five small windows with vertical brick detailing above, face east at ground level. The south face of the building houses six windows on each of the three stories, with two small additional windows placed near the middle of the building on the first story. A majority of the windows are inset, rather than flush, and are accented with stone sills and vertical brick detailing above. Entablatures accent a heavy cornice on the front of the building.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION: Describe the person, important events, and/or historical patterns associated with the structure/site and surrounding area.

The following information is taken directly from Missoula County Images Volume II by Stan Cohen:

The story of Community Hospital begins with two brothers who were prominent in the early history of Western Montana medicine. Dr. Charles Thornton came west in 1905 to begin a practice in Corvallis. His brother, Dr. Will Thornton came west in 1907 and started his practice in Stevensville. In 1910, Dr. Will built the first hospital in the Bitterroot Valley and ran it until 1917, when he moved to Missoula. At that time, he built the Thornton Hospital, now the Thornton Apartments at the corner of Third and Orange Streets. Eventually, the brothers formed a partnership and bought the 300 block between East Front and Main Street, site of the present Missoula City-County Library. There they built a 42-bed hospital, completed in 1922. Adjoining the hospital was a 16-room nurses' home, formerly the residence of A.B. Hammond, founder of the Missoula Mercantile. Dr. Will and Dr. Charles ran the hospital until 1943, when Dr. Will died. Previously, he had sold his interest to Dr. Rudolph E. Wirth, who with Dr. Charles operated the hospital as partners until 1947 when it was purchased by the Memorial Hospital Association of Western Montana. In 1959, 12 years after the Thornton Hospital had been sold, the name was changed to Community Hospital to emphasize that it was a facility for Missoula and Western Montana. Dr. Gordon Reynolds, president of the hospital board, announced a drive to raise \$500,000 to enlarge the structure. The city was growing rapidly and the hospital was running at 112 percent capacity. By 1964, the board realized that an entirely new hospital was needed. And it announced another campaign to raise funds for a \$2 million building. In the fall of 1965, the hospital purchased 40.3 acres of county land at Fort Missoula as a building site. The new 105-bed Community Hospital held its grand opening in April 1972. Today, with the addition of the doctors' office buildings and the rehabilitation center, the hospital has become the Community Medical Center. It is now a major medical facility for western Montana (Cohen, 1993: 372).

Although it is implied that Will Thornton constructed the Thornton hospital in 1917, a 1909 Missoulian Building List, as well as the 1912 Sanborn map reveal that the building was constructed eight years prior. According to the Sanborn maps, the building was originally utilized as a three-story apartment building. William P. Hoopes is the first known resident of 508 South 3rd West, and he was listed as a janitor at the Roosevelt School and Boarding House as early as 1911. It is possible that the Thornton Apartments originally served as a boarding house, due to the fact that William Hoopes' occupation and residence were listed as the same address. As early as 1917, this building was utilized as the Thornton Hospital (Cohen, 1993: 372). William Thornton owned and operated the hospital, and resided in the building as well. He was listed as 43 years old in 1920, and lived in the building with his wife Maude, his son Theodore and his daughter Bertha. In addition, seven employees lived in the building and included the following:

Leona Forkner 18, a maid; Elffie Marsh 32, a nurse; Nellie Rice 40, a nurse; Fred Neavel 31, a cook; William Eddings 70, a janitor; Agnes Anderson 26 a nurse; and Esther Huson 23, a maid.

The hospital was utilized as apartments again in the 1920's, and as early as 1927 Ida B. Dolf, Albert Thornburgh, May Butterworth, and Chas Donovan were residents here. In 1929, the following residents were listed:

Muriel E. Pearson-schoolteacher for public school; Albert M. Thornburgh-accountant for Northern Flour Mills Company; Mrs. Irene E. Taylor-widow of Christopher L.; Maxwell, Mrs. Minnie E. Maxwell-widow of David; William D. and Grace G. McCune-manager of Missoula County Credit Men's Association; John W. and Mildred S. Galloway- advertising salesman for Northwest Publishing Company; Mary L. George-teacher at Central School; Dessa K. Feehan-clerk for the Forest Service. Mabel E. Jones-teacher at Willard; Myrtle Moe; Ida B. Dolf-teacher at Willard School; and May B. Butterworth-nurse at Thornton Hospital.

The 1934 Polk Directory listed the following residents at the Thornton Apartments:

Harold C. Dixon, a traveling auditor and married to Leonore G.; Stanley M. Teel, a U of M assistant professor and married to Ruth R.; Mrs. Florence I. Finley, a clerk for McKay Art Company; Clara M. Griffin, a bookkeeper for Standard Meat Market; Anice C. Dolf, a stenographer for Missoula Mercantile Co; Stanley M. Trenouth, a physician at St. Patrick's Hospital and married to Ruth; Mary V. Harris, a high school teacher; Louis Stella, a cook and married to Ruth; Francis H. Cooney, a salesman married to Rose D.; Mabel E. Jones, a teacher at Willard School; and Ethel W. Baldy, a teacher at Paxson School.

As early as 1952 the following residents were listed at the Thornton Apartments:

Hugo J. and Mae K. Arden. Hugo worked as the credit manager at the Western Montana Clinic; Ronald C. and Daisy M. Jacobs who owned the Food Center grocery store on Higgins Avenue; Rex and Elizabeth M. White; Adeline Beaver, a teacher for the public school; William and Bonita Cole. William was a student at the university; Ronald J. and Thelma M. DeMers. Ronald worked as a driver for Montana Western Lumber; Paul and Dorothy Bourquin, owners of Bourquin's Conoco Service; Michael E. and Jennie McCue. Michael worked as a driver for the state Highway Commission; William R. and Marcia L. Nash. William worked as a bartender; Jas and Marjorie H. Mayes. Jas worked as the office manager for the Florence Laundry Company; and Wilma MacKenzie, a teacher at the public school.

INTEGRITY: Assess the degree to which the structure/site, and surrounding area accurately convey the historical associations of the property.

The historic integrity of this building has been retained due to the survival of original design and materials, and continuity of setting and location. The building would be a contributing element to the historic district.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: Justify how the persons, important events or historical patterns associated with structure/site lend the property significance and/or describe the ways in which the structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular period, building type or style.

This building is not known to be associated with persons or events that meet National Register criteria for historic significance. The structure, however, would be a contributing element in a historic district because of its representation of early Missoula architecture.

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Missoula Office Of Planning & Grants

Address: 435 Ryman, Missoula, Mt. 59802

Date: December, 2001

**GEOGRAPHICAL
INFORMATION:**

Acreage: Less than one

USGS Quad: Southwest
Missoula

UTM's: 0728203/5194759