<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Address: 307 Pleasant St</th>
<th>Site Number: 24CR1353</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic Address (if applicable):</td>
<td>(An historic district number may also apply.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City/Town: Miles City</td>
<td>County: Custer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Name: Elizabeth Nickens Residence</td>
<td>Legal Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Owner(s):</td>
<td>PM: MT Township: 8N Range: 47E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Ownership  ☒ Private ☐ Public</td>
<td>¼ ¼ NE ¼ of Section: 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Property Name:</td>
<td>Lot(s): 004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner(s): Peter Collins</td>
<td>Block(s): 015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Address: 305 Pleasant St</td>
<td>Addition: Miles City Original Town-site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles City, MT, 59301-2905</td>
<td>Year of Addition:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>USGS Quad Name: Miles City Year: 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Use: domestic</td>
<td>□ NAD 27 or ☑ NAD 83(preferred)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Date: 1910 ☑ Estimated ☐ Actual</td>
<td>Zone: 13 Easting: 434330.17 Northing: 5139545.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Original Location ☐ Moved Date Moved:</td>
<td>Geocode: 14-1740-33-2-06-03-0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Register of Historic Places</td>
<td>Date of this document: 6/5/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRHP Listing Date:</td>
<td>Form Prepared by: Diana Nettleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic District:</td>
<td>Address: MTSHPO, 1301 E. Lockey, Helena, MT 59620-1202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRHP Eligible: ☑ Yes ☐ No</td>
<td>Daytime Phone: 406-444-7715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT SHPO USE ONLY</td>
<td>Comments: Property record form written as part of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible for NRHP: ☑ Yes ☐ no</td>
<td>“Identifying Montana’s African American Heritage Places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria: X A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D</td>
<td>Project.”</td>
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merge pages with this form

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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFORMATION SOURCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>INTEGRITY (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association)</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>CURRENT PHOTOS (building exterior and key interior spaces)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>SITE PLAN</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NRHP Listing Date:  
NRHP Eligibility: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Individually ☐ Contributing to Historic District ☐ Noncontributing to Historic District  
NRHP Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
Area of Significance:  
Period of Significance:
Montana Historic Property Record Form

Property Name:   Elizabeth Nickens Residence
Architectural Style: Other    If Other, specify: National Folk
Property Type: Domestic    Specific Property Type: Single Family

Architect:    Architectural Firm/City/State:
Builder/Contractor:    Company/City/State:
Source of Information:

Architectural Description:

Setting & Location:
307 Pleasant Street in Miles City Montana resides in lot 004 of historic block 015 and is part of the original Miles City Town-site. The streets bounding this historic block are Pleasant on the Southeast, 3rd on the Southwest, Palmer street along the Northwest, and lastly 4th on the Northeast side. An alley dissects the block along its East-West axis, which lies behind the house. The house enjoys a view of Riverside Park to the Southwest. This front-gable, one-story National Folk style residence sits one the south edge of the lot just west of center of the block’s south half. It features an original hipped front porch, now enclosed by plywood panels, across its south (front) elevation. The original gabled kitchen extension encompasses the north side of the building, and has a slightly lower ridgeline. Modern metal covers the main and kitchen roofs, as well as the single interior chimney stack centered along the main ridgeline. Asphalt shingles cover the porch roof. Wide horizontal clapboard siding, of historic age but not original to the house, clads the exterior walls and gable ends. The siding hides the foundation materials. An emerald green patch of grass lines the East side of the house, while the west side leaves approximately 5 feet of space next to the neighboring building. The neighboring property’s concrete sidewalk bounds the lawn to the southwest. Raised garden beds hemmed by concrete blocks appear at the north and south ends of the lawn. The south garden plot contains low sitting plants while the north plot displays taller plants and a white garden trellis with a diamond pattern.

South Front Façade
The front façade consists of a front gabled roof line with a metal chimney visible on the apex of the roof. This leads down into the cream colored clapboard siding of the gable-end before reaching the hipped porch. Narrow coped wood trim covers the very shallow eave above the plywood-infilled openings below. The posts are not visible. The porch door is slightly to the east of the center, creating an asymmetric façade. The white-colored, wood, five-panel door rests to the west of the lone window that is visible on this side of the building. The window consists of only 2 panes set horizontally stacked, and lies directly next to the door. The bottom two feet of the covered porch consists of the same cream colored clapboard siding as the gable end before reaching ground-level. A concrete sidewalk connects the front of the house to Pleasant Street on its South side.

West Elevation
The west side of the building employs a continuation of the asphalt roof for the porch, as well as continued forest green plywood panel for the exterior of the covered porch. Again the bottom 2 feet of the porch returns to the cream colored clapboard siding that makes up the majority of the house. The exterior of the porch extends approximately 3 feet from the main section of the building, at which point the cream colored clapboard is the dominant exterior material. A tall, one-over-one window appears at the northern end of the main structure, creating yet another asymmetrical view for the house. The kitchen extension’s west elevation contains a smaller, centered, one-over-one window unit.

Remaining Elevations
The remaining elevations are not visible from the supplied source images, but it is clear that the materials for the roof and exterior continue along the North and East elevations.
Henry Nickens was born in Virginia, and Elizabeth Stone was born in Texas around 1851. Henry Nickens served in the Civil War with the 38th United States Colored Infantry Regiment, which comprised men from Virginia and Maryland. Upon the completion of the Civil War, the regiment was reassigned to Texas where it served until 1867. In 1869, the 38th and the 41st Infantry Regiments were reorganized into the 24th (among others) in which Henry Nickens also served. He was part of the Buffalo Soldiers that served in the Indian Wars all along the Western Frontier. While serving in the Southwestern United States, Henry married Elizabeth Stone in 1876 in Starr County Texas. Henry found himself wounded to the point of being labeled a disabled veteran while in Arizona in 1890. It was around this point in time that he and his wife Elizabeth moved to Miles City Montana. There is little to document Henry’s time in Montana except for his death, which occurred December 28, 1898. He was granted a Civil War Veteran’s grave to rest in Mount Moriah cemetery in Butte, and the Anaconda Standard listed that he was a “well known war veteran” and that his “funeral was largely attended”, and that he was the only African American veteran interred at Mount Moriah at the time.

Elizabeth Nickens was alone in Miles City Montana for a long while. At her residence on Pacific Avenue, she did have her daughter and granddaughter living with her the year after Henry died, but they did not stay longer than that year. In addition to serving as a laundress, and she also enjoyed the income of letting out a room to a border by the name of George Williams. This agreement lasted about 10 years, at which point a very unfortunate incident occurred. The Anaconda Standard reported that on Monday May 9th, 1910, “colored George Williams” was put in jail for “battering up a colored female friend, Mrs. Nickens”. It was after this incident that Elizabeth found she could not live in her house without the income of a boarder and moved to 307 Pleasant Street. Of the three homes in which she is documented to have lived, this is the only one that remains standing.

The house rose on the site approximately 1910, as it is visible on Sanborn maps only after that date, and it resides on lands that were once owned by Fort Keogh and the Northern Pacific Railroad Company after that. Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Nickens lived in the house until about 1928, after which she moved into the very last house in which she ever lived, 415 Fourth Street. She died April 3, 1934 and is buried in Miles City.

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1 Federal Census, 1900.
2 Civil War Pension File, Henry Nickens.
3 Texas Marriage Index.
4 Civil War Pension File, Henry Nickens.
5 Ibid.
6 Veteran Headstone File.
7 Sgt. Henry Nickens Headstone.
8 "Funeral Service Announcement for Henry Nickens", 1/2/1899, p8.
10 Federal Census, 1900.
11 Polk & Co. 1909.
14 Federal Census, 1930.
15 "Mary Elizabeth Headstone".

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Information Sources/Bibliography


Federal Census Year: 1900; Census Place: Miles City, Custer, Montana; Roll: 910; Page: 13A; Enumeration District: 0202; FHL microfilm: 1240910 – Accessed at Ancestry.com June, 2016.


Statement of Significance

Mrs. Nickens residence at 307 Pleasant Street exhibits significance in its association with African American Military History through the life of a military widow of a Buffalo Soldier. It also finds significance in being one of the very few African American homes to remain standing in the Miles City area. While it may not be eligible as an individual building at this point in time, it does contribute to the eligibility of the neighborhood as an historic district.
Montana Historic Property Record Form

Property Name: Elizabeth Nickens Residence  
Smithsonian Number: 24CR1353

Integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association)

The 307 Pleasant Street, or Mrs. Nickens Residence, retains integrity in the overall location, feeling, and association of the building. The materials used for the exterior of the building are not historic, though the original windows may remain. The original hipped porch remains standing, though the non-original siding and plywood infill obscure the original design from view. Still in use as a residence, the building stands on a historic block in the Original Townsite, flanked by a house that dates to at least 1883 on the east, and a house of similar vintage to the Nickens residence to the west. Indeed the half-block and that on the south side of Pleasant Street contain many small-scale historic homes. More commercial development is encroaching on the block, however, isolating it from other residential zones in the city.
Montana Historic Property Record Form

Property Name: Elizabeth Nickens Residence

Smithsonian Number: 24CR1353

Photographs

Montana Historic Property Record Form

Property Name: Elizabeth Nickens Residence
Smithsonian Number: 24CR1353

Elizabeth Nickens Residence
307 Pleasant St., Miles City, MT
Geocode: 14-1740-33-2-06-03-0000
UTM Zone 13: Easting: 434330.17 Northing: 5139545.92
Lat: 46.406299 / Long: -105.854362
Topographic Map

Montana Historic Property Record Form

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