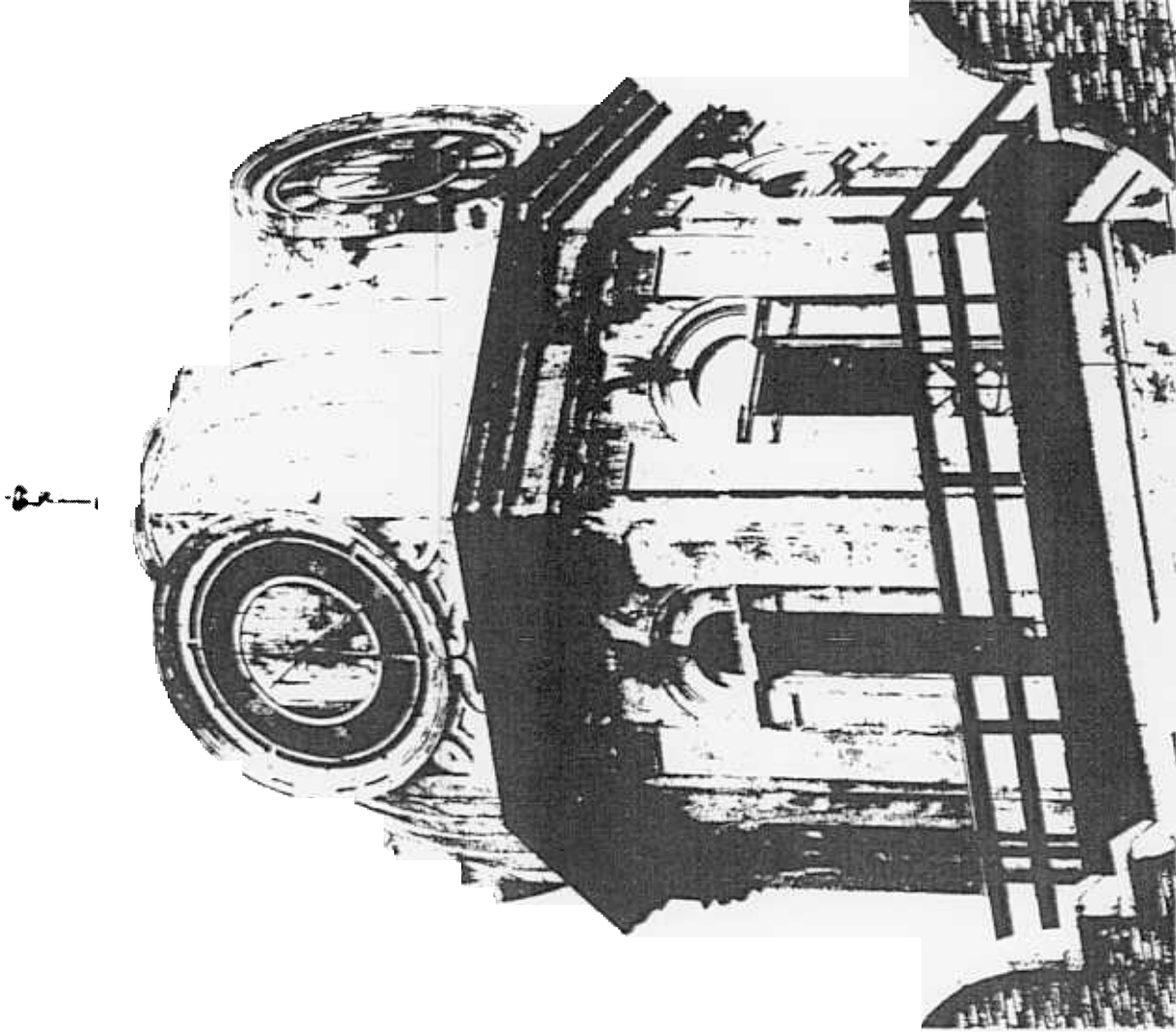


DOWN TOWN

• HISTORIC • WALKING • TOUR •



In its infancy, Lewistown existed only as a trading post for a nomadic way of life, serving Indian traders, hunters and trappers. Company F, of the 7th Infantry, selected the site for Camp Lewis, in 1874. Established to protect commerce on the Carroll Trail, the temporary military post was named in honor of a former Major, W.H. Lewis, and it is likely the name "Lewistown", selected ten years later, was derived from the post.

In 1879, some 25 Metis families, descendants of the French and Indian, established the first permanent settlement, and before any appreciable white migration occurred, "Big Spring Creek" had 150 Metis families. The present site of Lewistown was taken for homesteads by Francis J. Janeaux and Paul Morase. Many Lewistown streets bear the French names of these first settlers.

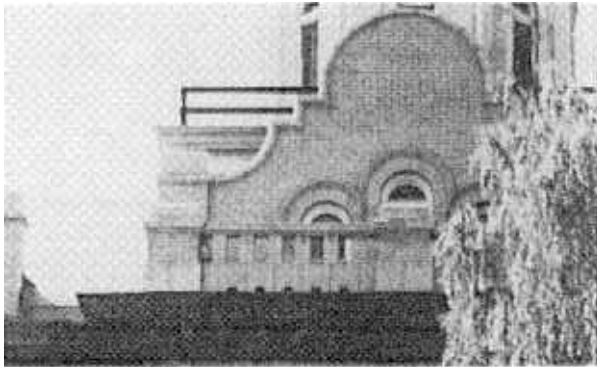
Cattle and sheep ranchers began to take advantage of the "open" range and the timely discovery of gold in the Judith and Moccasin Mountains spurred the growth of several nearby mining camps. Janeaux, a licensed trader, was encouraged by these developments to build a store and to plat a portion of his land for a village. In 1882 the original townsite was laid out, mining camp style, using a fence for a starting line.

By 1883, Janeaux was indebted to his supplier, T.C. Power and Brother, of Fort Benton, for over \$5000 and he agreed to turn over all buildings, merchandise and land necessary to settle his debt to "The Merchant Prince of the Plains". The efforts to "Boom" the town and the political connections of T.C. Power paid off in Lewistown being designated county seat when Fergus County was created from the eastern end of Meagher County in 1885. In August of 1899, after several attempts failed, Lewistown was incorporated as a city.

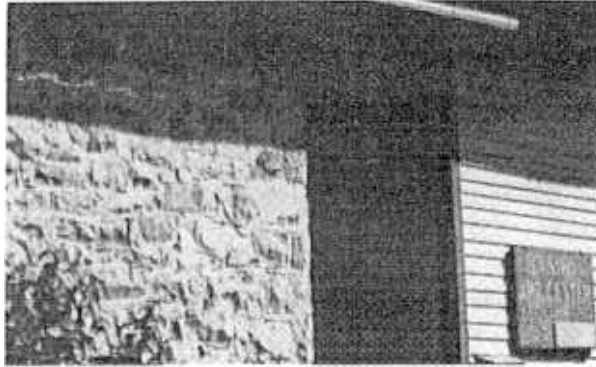
As a singular influence, the "homestead" phenomenon had the most significant impact on the growth of the community. The Lewistown District, which contained 6,454,000 acres in public land, was to draw thousands of homeseekers to the dry land acres of Central Montana. Lewistown grew rapidly to a major agricultural and supply center, and ascended to economic, political, and social importance in the opening years of the 20th century, when improved transportation to the city coincided with the massive homesteading activity on the prairie.

A stylized, cursive logo for "Lewistown" in a dark, textured font. The letters are interconnected and have a hand-drawn, calligraphic feel. The logo is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator for the office name.

• HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE •



1. The Fergus County Courthouse, begun in 1907 to accommodate the business of the rapidly growing county, represents the move by many fledgling Montana communities to erect permanent masonry buildings. It was designed in the "Mission Style" as a regional reaction against "imported" conventional eastern styles that were being built in the west at the time.



2. The "Art Center" was built in the mid-1890's by Charles F.W. Lehman, one of the leading pioneer businessmen of Lewistown. The rubble stone building, long known as the "bunkhouse", began life simply as a rooming house for the unmarried male clerks and drivers of the Charles Lehman Co. Added on to in 1908, it also served as a dorm for rural students attending Fergus High School.



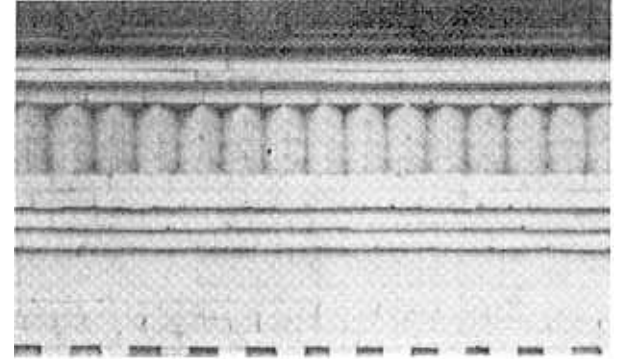
3. This grand cut stone "four square" residence remains a symbol of the stone masonry building tradition that characterizes so many early structures in Lewistown. It was built in 1905 for Ivan Hobensack, manager of Judith Hardware Co., and acquired by William Fergus in 1910. It remained in the family until 1978.



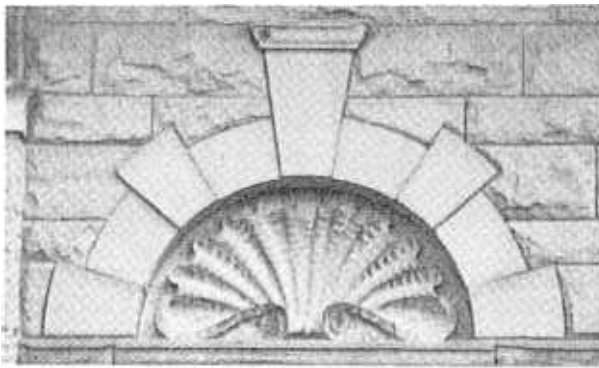
4. This large frame building served as the officer quarters at the military post of Fort Maginnis, which was established southeast of the Judith Mountains in 1880. In 1898 David Hilger, pioneer businessman, purchased the structure, disassembled it and rebuilt it on this site. He resided here with his family until 1913, when they moved across the alley to 216 7th Ave. No.



The Carnegie Library was designed and built by T.J. Tubb, an early contractor. Built in the Roman Revival style popularized by Thomas Jefferson, it features many of the design idioms of that style, namely the raised platform, the four columned portico with pediment enclosing an arch or lunette.



6. On the north side of Fifth and Main stands the old Judith Basin Bank Building. Built in 1899 in the Italianate commercial style popular in those days, these buildings currently form a dramatic period grouping. The Judith Basin Bank was reorganized after its first decade and the First National Bank became the "lusty offspring" of the original enterprise in 1907.



7. Currently housing Sears, Lyles, and the Moose Club, this Beaux Arts facade rendered in local sandstone was originally designed as one building with subtle variations. Especially note the three round topped transoms in the center section above the second floor windows, where sheet metal fan motifs are accented by quoined voussoirs and keystones of the surrounding arch.



8. Walk north on Fourth St. to Broadway. The Masonic Temple was designed in the classical Beaux Arts style by the local design firm of the Wasmendorf and Eastman in 1908 to comply with the tenets of the lodge. The Masonic Temple stands as testimony to the skill and technique of Lewistown's resident Croatian stonemasons.



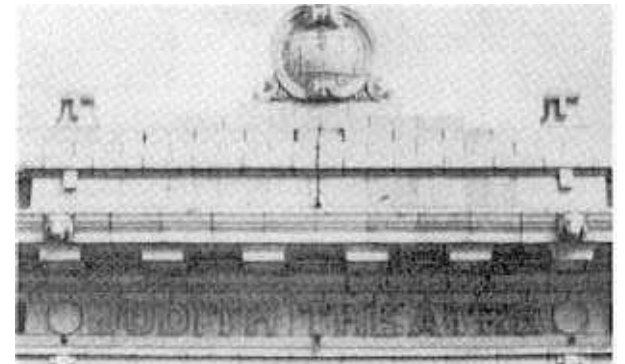
9. The narrow three story richly decorated facade of the Warr Lane Building makes elaborate use of terra cotta and the polychrome brick. Note the central cartouche "skylined" on the entablature capping the building, and the eight antefixa (lion's heads) just below. Built in 1913, the building was designed in the Beaux Arts style by the local office of architects Link & Haire.



10. On the northwest corner of Third and Main stands the "new", 1901 home of the Power Mercantile Co., established in Lewistown in 1883. The Power Mercantile was managed and eventually owned by W.D. Symmes, a pioneer businessman who started with the firm as a driver of a delivery wagon in 1889. Always active in the development of Lewistown, he served two terms as mayor.



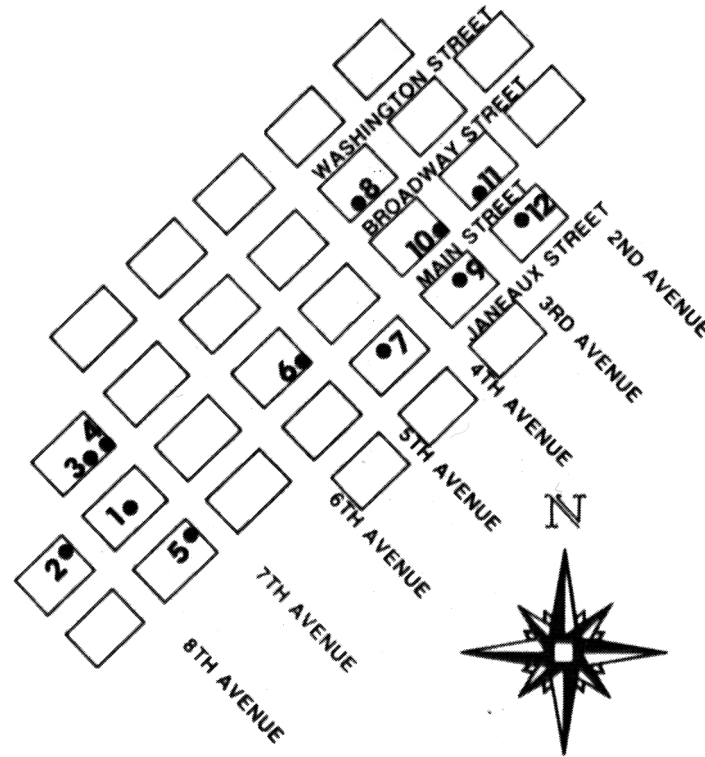
11. On the northwest corner of Third and Main stands the Montana Building, which has five stories, and the largest terra cotta facade in Montana. The Montana Building was designed by Link & Haire architects in 1916, and emulated the Chicago Commercial style used to rebuild that city after its famous fire.



12. The Bank of Fergus County, built the Judith Theatre for Lewistown "as a place of amusement, not as a financial investment". Designed by architects Link & Haire, whose office was next door, the Judith Theatre hosted moving pictures, vaudeville shows, political rallies, and concerts which entertained, provoked and delighted Central Montana audiences.

Historic Preservation is the business of ensuring the survival of the important sites, structures, buildings and objects from our past, of preserving some of the tangible evidence of our collective history. Historic Preservation is important because it teaches us about the past which created our present, because it keeps for succeeding generations, the aesthetically pleasing historic edifices which are valuable as art, and because it has proven to be economical, resource-conserving, and labor intensive.

Much of the physical evidence left by early builders is still available to us. Symbols of Lewistown's heritage stand side by side with evidence of her progress. These symbols serve as unique reminders of the path our community's builders have followed since the first traders and trappers came in the dawn of the nineteenth century.



It is true that Lewistown and Fergus County is its people; but in passing, earlier generations of those people have left behind a special heritage in the structures they built — a heritage which is our privilege to enjoy and conserve.

The Lewistown Historic Preservation Commission serves as steward of the area's historic and architectural resources and functions under the authority of the preservation ordinance. The Historic Preservation Office provides staff support to the Commission and numerous services to the public.

Donations are acceptable through the City of Lewistown on behalf of the Historic Preservation Office. The Historic Preservation Office is located in the Montana Building at 3rd and Main, Box 626, Lewistown, Montana 59457 (406) 538-2201.