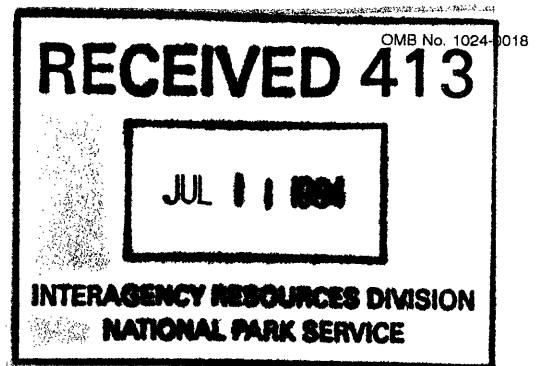


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission



A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Properties of Kalispell, Montana

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1891-1892
Transportation, 1891-1942
Ethnic Heritage, 1891-1942
Community Planning and Development, 1892-1942
Development of Commerce and Industry, 1891-1942
Lumber Industry, 1891-1942
Architect-designed Buildings, 1891-1942
Influence of Federal Government, 1891-1942
Social and Cultural Development, 1891-1942
Movement of Buildings, 1891-1942

C. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Kathy McKay Date: June 1993
Organization: Private Consultant
Street & Number: 491 Eckelberry Dr. Telephone: (406) 892-1538
City or Town: Columbia Falls State: Montana Zip: 59912

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official *M. A. [Signature]* Date 6-28-94

MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

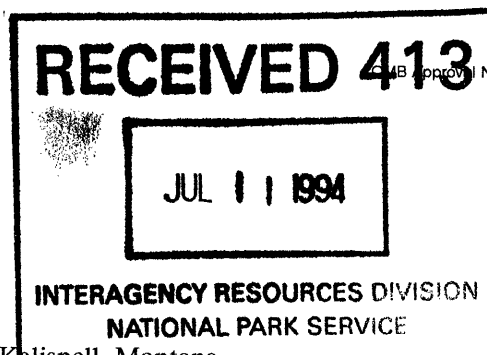
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register *[Signature]* Date 8/16/94

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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

INTRODUCTION

The City of Kalispell, with a current population of approximately 12,000, is located at the intersection of Highways 2 and 93 in the Flathead Valley of northwestern Montana. The Continental Divide lies 60 miles to the east and the rolling foothills of the Cabinet Mountains to the west. The international boundary line is less than 100 miles to the north. A dominant feature of the valley is Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi River. This lake, which is approximately 28 miles long and nine miles at its widest, lies just nine miles to the southeast of Kalispell. Flathead Lake is fed by the Flathead River and its many forks and tributaries (including the Whitefish, Swan and Stillwater rivers), and the main channel of the Flathead River runs just one mile to the east of the city. The Flathead Valley continues south of the lake; Kalispell lies within the "upper" Flathead Valley, at the beginning of the Rocky Mountain Trench (a long, level depression extending northwest more than 1,000 miles through Canada). Kerr Dam at the foot of Flathead Lake provides some hydroelectric power, and the Hungry Horse Dam on the South Fork of the Flathead provides flood control and power that feeds into the Columbia River Basin system. The main line of the Great Northern Railway ran through Kalispell from 1892 until 1904. The town is now on a spur line for freight but not passenger rail traffic.

The Flathead Valley is about 30 miles long by 15 miles wide. Kalispell's elevation is 2,955 feet above sea level and it lies on the relatively flat valley floor. The intermontane valley has fertile bottomland soils, and Kalispell receives about 15" in annual precipitation. The valley is surrounded by mountains covered with Douglas fir, western larch, ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine and other species of trees. A century ago, the valley was cloaked in thick pine and fir forests with only occasional natural meadows. Today almost all of the valley has been cleared for farmland.

Much of the land surrounding the valley has been under federal management since the late 1800s. Land managed by the Flathead National Forest surrounds the Flathead Valley and includes popular recreational areas such as the Jewel Basin Hiking Area and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. The west entrance to Glacier National Park (with Waterton Lakes Park to its north) is about 30 miles northeast of Kalispell. Land under tribal management is also nearby; the northern boundary of the Flathead Indian Reservation is about halfway down Flathead Lake.

Both the geography and the economy link northwestern Montana more closely to the Pacific Northwest than to eastern Montana.

EARLY SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, 1891-1892

The Flathead Valley was one of the last areas in the trans-Mississippi west to be settled by whites, primarily because of its geographic isolation. Surrounded by rugged mountains and a large lake and characterized by long, hard winters, the valley remained difficult and hazardous to access for decades after the first whites came through the area in the early 1800s. The establishment of the Blackfoot and Flathead Indian Reservations in 1855 insulated the region further. In the 18th and 19th centuries, bands of Kootenai lived at the head of Flathead Lake and hunted and fished in the valley, but they did not have large, permanent settlements in the area. A few trappers and traders passed through the valley in the early 1800s, and around 1812 the Hudson's Bay Company established an outpost, Howse House, near the head of Flathead Lake. Following the Treaty of 1846, which designated land south of the 49th parallel United States soil, various prospectors, trappers, settlers and adventurers passed through the Flathead Valley. But, none are known to have settled permanently, and the area remained virtually unknown to the outside world.

This situation changed because of developments in Canada. In 1862, gold was discovered in the Kootenai district of British Columbia north of the Flathead Valley, and miners and freighters bringing supplies from Missoula passed through the

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upper Flathead Valley on their way north. A minor gold rush on Libby Creek in 1867 again brought people through the general area. The trail to the gold fields followed a rough wagon road along the west shore of Flathead Lake, crossed Ashley Creek near the present site of Kalispell, and then continued north along the Stillwater River and on to the Kootenai River. This north/south route was used for a number of decades to connect western Montana with southern Canada.¹ Some miners stopped to prospect in the Flathead, but little was found and no one stayed long.

In the 1870s, a number of men arrived in the upper Flathead Valley intending to graze cattle. Many were unsuccessful and left soon after, but a few stayed. Both geographic isolation and economic conditions in the cattle industry worked against these stockmen. By 1890, in fact, much of the land that would have been suitable for grazing had been converted to agricultural use.²

The beginnings of permanent settlement in the upper Flathead Valley were established in the 1880s. In 1881 Selish, the first town in the upper Flathead, was established on the Flathead River five miles east of the present town of Somers. The first real influx of white settlers to the valley arrived in 1883 after the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) was completed to Ravalli, north of Missoula. Some of the valley's early settlers were actually NPRR workers whose jobs had been discontinued and who decided to locate permanently in Montana. To accommodate the Flathead Lake traffic, a slow sailboat was converted in 1883 to steam. Steamboat service was established on Flathead Lake in 1885 to carry settlers and supplies to the upper valley.³

The two main towns in the Flathead Valley prior to Kalispell's existence lay within a few miles of the future site of Kalispell. Ashley was the first trading center, established in 1884 or 1885. The small settlement featured a few residences plus a general store, post office, blacksmith shop, saloon, drug store, and even a literary and debating society. The town was named after Joe Ashley, a trader who had come to the Flathead to homestead in 1857. Even after Demersville was established in approximately 1887, Ashley remained the largest town in the Flathead Valley until 1890; even settlers 70 miles to the north received their mail at the Ashley post office. In 1889 Ashley had approximately three times as many voters as Demersville. The city of Kalispell has now grown around the original site of Ashley, which was located on Kalispell's southwest perimeter in the vicinity of Meridian Road and 7th Street West.⁴

Demersville was the main town in the upper valley from 1887 until 1891, when Kalispell took the lead because of the impending arrival of the railroad. The town was founded by French-Canadian T. J. Demers, cattleman, merchant and freighter on the Fort Steele route. Demersville's chief advantage was its location at the head of navigation, approximately 20 miles up the winding Flathead River from the north end of the lake. Soon after its founding, the town was supporting

¹Isch, Flora Mae Bellefleur, "The Development of the Upper Flathead and Kootenai Country," (M. A. Thesis, Montana State University, 1948), p. 65.

²Isch, Flora Mae Bellefleur, "The Importance of Railroads in the Development of Northwestern Montana," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (January 1950): 19-20.

³"Flathead Facts, Descriptive of the Resources of Missoula County" (Missoula, MT: Missoula Publishing Co., 1890), available in Montana - Flathead County - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT, p. 21; Isch, "Development", p. 73; Swaney, Andrew, "Statement of Andrew W. Swaney" (1923, typed), available in Montana - Flathead County - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT, p. 1.

⁴"Kalispell, the Metropolis of Flathead County, Montana," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1903, p. 1; Schnell, Jerry, editor, "George McVey Fisher: Pioneer Montana Presbyterian Minister" (1991), p. 13; Foy, Leslie, "Walkup and Swaney Trading Post on Ashley Creek" in Flathead County - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, Montana; Ingalls, "Over Trails of the Past," in Johns, Samuel E., "The Pioneers," (compiled 1943), available at Flathead County Library, Kalispell, Montana, vol. 2, p. 7, vol. 10, pp. 28-29; Elwood, Henry, *Kalispell, Montana and the Upper Flathead Valley* (Kalispell, MT: Thomas Printing, 1980), pp. 6-7.

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the Demersville branch of the Missoula Mercantile, plus a post office, town hall, hotel, livery stable, two real estate offices, a weekly newspaper, and a military installation with soldiers temporarily transferred from Fort Missoula.⁵ Demersville was, by all accounts, a rough-and-tumble boom town, with settlers flowing in and out and most people trying to profit from the Flathead's abundant resources or from each other. Demersville's heyday was in 1890, when it served as headquarters for the Great Northern Railway grading contractors building the line west from the summit of Marias Pass. As early Flathead settler and author Frank Linderman described this time, "Demersville saw a rosy future and preened herself accordingly."⁶

James J. Hill, Great Northern Railway president, decided to extend his northern rail route all the way to Seattle (at first, the line ran from St. Paul, Minnesota to Great Falls). Engineers sought the best route across the Continental Divide, basing their work on previous surveys and on published maps of the area. Flathead Valley homesteaders Major Marcus Baldwin, Hugh G. Good, James O'Boyle and a Mr. Spotts traveled across what is now known as Marias Pass in the fall of 1889 and reported to James Hill on their success at finding the route across the mountains used by local Indians and trappers. Hill then sent Great Northern engineer John F. Stevens to verify the location. Stevens traveled with a Kalispell Indian from the east side of the mountains to the summit, thus "discovering" Marias Pass. At approximately the same time, Charles F. B. Haskell, a Great Northern survey engineer, surveyed a route from Marias Pass into the Flathead Valley and later the route west to the Kootenai River (across "Haskell Pass").⁷

In 1890 there were an estimated 3,000 people in the upper Flathead Valley. The coming of the railroad promised to increase the population of the region dramatically and to open up vast new markets for farmers, loggers, and others.⁸ New towns sprang up (for example, Columbia Falls was established in the spring of 1891), hoping to reap great profits from the coming railroad. Everyone speculated wildly about the exact route of the railroad line and the location of the railroad division point. Some of the valley's early settlers stood to make a great deal of money by selling land to the railroad, but to avoid speculation the railroad attempted to keep the route secret.

Demersville residents felt confident that their town would be the railroad division point, but their town enjoyed only a brief railroad-related boom. Construction of the railroad grade, bridges and tunnels employed a tremendous number of men (one contemporary newspaper account said the contractors had 6,000 men employed and were said to want 4,000 more). According to George Stannard, a Demersville real estate agent, the town "sprung at once into the limelight, and here congregated gamblers, dance houses, saloons, theaters, hurdy-gurdies, and all kinds of people, to relieve the poor laborers of the heavy burden of packing around the gold and silver coin." Shepperd-Seims of St. Paul, Minnesota had the contract to construct the railroad line from Havre west, and the company built its warehouse and distributed its payroll in Demersville until moving to Kalispell. In 1891 Demersville had a population of 1,500, and about 100 four-horse teams were coming into and leaving the town every day. According to one account, after the roads dried in the spring of 1891, 50,000 pounds of goods moved daily by wagon between the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern construction crews.⁹

⁵"Flathead Facts," *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12; Elwood, Henry, *The Train Didn't Stay Long* (Kalispell, MT: Thomas Printing, 1982), p. 7.

⁶Linderman, Frank B., *Montana Adventurer: the Recollections of Frank B. Linderman* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), p. 57.

⁷Elwood, Henry, "The Flathead Country," in Flathead County Superintendent of Schools, *Sagas of the Pioneers*, (1956), p. 110.

⁸Burlingame, Merrill G. and K. Ross Toole, *A History of Montana* (New York, NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc., 1957), vol. 2, p. 234.

⁹"Flathead Valley," *Inter Lake*, April 10, 1891; Stannard, George F., "Navigation of Flathead waters," reprinted in *Kalispell News Centennial* (1992), originally written December 21, 1929, p. 11; Stannard, George, "The Early Story of Flathead Valley, Mont." in Kalispell Water Department, "8th Annual Report" (1921), p. 43; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 4.

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During the boom days of Demersville its supply point was Missoula, 125 miles to the south, and all goods were freighted to the new town from there. Goods were hauled by train to Ravalli, freighted by wagon more than 30 miles to the foot of Flathead Lake, then carried by steamboat to the head of navigation at Demersville. Construction of the Great Northern Railway was not the only railroad work that kept Flathead Valley residents employed, however. The Canadian Pacific Railroad was also being constructed across Canada in the 1890s. Supplies for railroad workers at Fort Steele were brought to Demersville by boat and then hauled north by freighters. This continued long after the Great Northern came to Kalispell.¹⁰

While railroad construction crews rushed to lay tracks over Marias Pass and into the Flathead Valley, the towns of Demersville, Ashley and Columbia Falls competed with each other for designation as the railroad division point, their residents knowing that whichever town was chosen would be guaranteed prosperity. Demersville boasted of being the head of navigation, Ashley of its location at the valley's natural outlet to the west, and Columbia Falls of its location where the tracks would emerge from the mountains. None of these towns were chosen, however. According to the generally accepted story, Charles E. Conrad, representing James J. Hill, first tried to purchase land in Columbia Falls but the landowners asked too high a price. Hill instructed Conrad to "go and buy a townsite and I'll build the railroad to it." Conrad subsequently bought part of the homesteads of Reverend George McVey Fisher and several others. Fisher's irrigated timothy hay meadow became the central part of the townsite of Kalispell.¹¹ According to an 1896 Great Northern publication, the railroad "naturally selected a site that promised to be the commercial centre of this part of the country." The Great Northern Railway rejected Demersville as the division point, reportedly because of its less satisfactory railroad grades and because Kalispell had a better water supply.¹² The Kalispell division point became the headquarters for the railroad between Cut Bank, Montana on the east and Troy, Montana on the west.

Demersville residents apparently remained confident that their town would continue to play a major role in the valley's transportation network. The price of lots in Demersville rocketed upwards, and additions were made to the original townsite. This continued until the late summer of 1891, even though the new railroad town of Kalispell had already been platted and business and residence lots in Kalispell were being sold by an agency established in Demersville.¹³ An earlier attempt to buy land for the railroad had not quite worked out as planned. In August of 1890, David R. McGinnis (later to settle in Kalispell and become one of its prominent boosters) and Joe Conner, both agents of Jim Hill, arrived in the Flathead Valley to locate and buy a townsite for the railroad division point, but they pretended to be laborers. They disguised themselves with hickory shirts and hands stained with walnut juice and obtained land for the townsite that lay along the railroad survey line marked across the valley. Just a few days later, however, the proposed route was moved, and McGinnis had to return to the Flathead to buy 200 acres of land where the main part of Kalispell would be located.¹⁴

¹⁰Swanberg, A. V., in Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹¹Houtz, G. M., "The Birth of Kalispell," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 16, 1934, p. 16.

¹²Howe, R. S., *The Great Northern Country, Being the Chronicles of the Happy Travellers Club* (St. Paul, MN: Great Northern railway, ca. 1896), p. 132; Hidy, Ralph W., *The Great Northern Railway: A History* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1988), p. 12.

¹³Houtz, G. M., quoted in Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁴McGinnis, David, "My First Trip to Flathead Valley," in Kalispell Water Department, "12th Annual Water Department Report" (1925), pp. 76-81.

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Land for the new town of Kalispell was purchased by several Great Northern townsite representatives from seven homesteaders. The new town of Kalispell was surveyed and platted in April of 1891, most of the purchases being in the name of A. A. White of Minnesota, a Great Northern Railway townsite man. The layout of Kalispell conforms to that of many other Great Northern Railway towns. The town plat has a "T-town" arrangement, with its main street perpendicular to the railroad tracks and development concentrated on one side of the tracks (the south). Although it was not built until 1903, the Flathead County Courthouse also conforms to a typical railroad-town plan in that it is located as an anchor in the middle of Main Street, on the south end facing north towards the railroad tracks.¹⁵

The town of Kalispell was formally established on March 17, 1891, and its name announced at that time. The name Kalispell (originally spelled Kalispel) is attributed to several sources and is given various meanings. Some said that it was named by James Hill after the Pend d'Oreilles term for the area meaning "upper flat country." Others said it was named after the Indian tribe of the same name, or that it was named for the post established by David Thompson at Thompson Falls called "Kulleyspell." Some believed that Charles E. Conrad named the new town. One of the early Flathead Valley residents, Duncan McDonald, felt that Kalispell was a corruption of the Flathead Indian words for camas prairie. Local historian Henry Elwood says it is believed to mean "camas" or "the prairie above the lake." The *Inter Lake* newspaper on March 30, 1891, reported that the new town would be called Kalispel, "the liquid Indian synonym for Flathead." The second "L" was reportedly added to place the accent on the last syllable.¹⁶

The original Kalispell Townsite Company, incorporated January 20, 1891, at St. Paul, consisted of S. G. Comstock and A. A. White (GNRR townsite men), C. E. and W. G. Conrad of Fort Benton (soon of Kalispell), representatives of the Agricultural Press Association, Joseph Coram of Boston, W. P. Clough of the Great Northern Railroad, and others. Clifford and Stannard, real estate and insurance agents of Demersville, originally owned much of the townsite property.¹⁷

On the first day that lots were sold, in April of 1891, buyers crowded around a map placed on a table pointing to the lots they wanted. According to an 1892 newspaper article, "Within thirty days after the plat was placed on the market \$300,000 worth of lots were sold."¹⁸ The *Missoulian* reported that the buyers on the first day were from all over, with residents of Portland, St. Paul and Great Falls the heaviest buyers. (Some of the Great Falls buyers had made fortunes buying lots in that city in 1884). Corner lots sold for as much as \$1,250.¹⁹

Kalispell boomed until June, but then "The town went on the rocks" and "the ground squirrels played tag in the streets." The footloose left town temporarily or permanently because of rumors that the railroad would not reach the Flathead for

¹⁵Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 31; "Kalispell, the Metropolis of Flathead County," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1903, p. 1; Hudson, John C., "Towns of the Western Railroads," *Great Plains Quarterly* 2 (winter 1982): 47, 49.

¹⁶"Kalispell, the Metropolis," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1903, p. 1; Whipps, W. C., *Memoirs*, p. 108, available at Montana Historical Society Library, Helena, MT; Ingalls, Emma, "Over Trails of the Past," in Johns, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 135; Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, p. 85; *Daily Inter Lake*, July 7, 1925, p. 5; Shaw, Charlie, *The Flathead Story* (Kalispell, MT: Flathead National Forest, 1964), p. 50; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 31. W.C. Whipps said the second "L" was added by Conrad in an attempt to invalidate the incorporation of First National Bank, a competitor to the Conrad National Bank.

¹⁷Stannard, George, "The Early Story of Flathead Valley, Mont.," in Kalispell Water Department, "8th Annual Water Department Report" (1921), p. 43; "Kalispell, the Metropolis" *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1903, p. 1; Murphy, James E. *Half Interest In a Silver Dollar* (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1983), p. 145; *Inter Lake*, January 3, 1890, p. 1.

¹⁸*Kalispell Graphic*, December 28, 1892.

¹⁹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 31; "Harry Stanford, Kalispell's First Police Force, Tells Story," *Kalispell News*, 50th Anniversary Edition (1941).

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two years.²⁰ In the summer of 1891, Jack Graves, an Ashley resident, harvested hay growing in the surveyed streets of Kalispell by driving his mower along the streets and alleys of the grassy town, much to the fury of the townsite company. Other towns in the valley called the new town "Wait a Spell," "Alkali Flats" or "Collapsetown." Kalispell did not revive until the railroad construction crews were within a few miles of town.²¹

In 1891, when the townsite of Kalispell was platted, the site consisted of irrigated hay meadows with the brushy banks of Ashley Creek winding through the valley. An 1891 traveler through the Flathead reported that "[on May 3] there were only 2 stacks of hay on the Kalispell townsite. On the return four days later there were 4 buildings up and a score or more under construction."²² One early resident said, "I can remember the sound of the saws and hammers which could be heard far into the night. Everybody seemed to be in a hurry to build."²³ During that first summer of Kalispell's existence, 23 saloons, six gambling halls, six honky-tonks, two Chinese restaurants, two Chinese laundries and four general stores were reportedly established.²⁴

Bessie Kirk lived in one of the first houses built in Kalispell. In 1891, from her house on the west side, "the present town of Kalispell was one vast field. She saw the timber line to the east, the hills on the west, and the lights of Demersville to the south."²⁵

On Jan. 1, 1892, the first Great Northern construction train rumbled into Kalispell and the "iron horse...at last snorted in the Garden of Eden of Montana."²⁶ According to an eyewitness, "Beer and whiskey were as free as the fresh air, and that evening there were many men that were partly sober."²⁷ Passenger trains began running through Kalispell in August of 1892. At that time, both passenger and freight trains were running daily.²⁸

Soon the young town, like the rest of the country, was hit hard by the financial panic of 1893. In addition, during a 30-day railroad strike in 1894 not a train came through Kalispell. Agricultural prices plummeted. Hoboes, even members of Coxey's Army, passed through town. As a local newspaper observed several decades later, "enthusiasm was substituted for cash and credits were stretched beyond all limits" before the financial panic, but then quite a number of Kalispell's early investors found it necessary to liquidate their assets and leave town.²⁹

²⁰Ingalls, *op. cit.*, p. 7; "When Kalispell Was Sowing Her Wild Oats," *Flathead Monitor*, December 16, 1926, p. 18.

²¹Mulany, W. F., "Recollections of Kalispell," in Kalispell Water Department, "11th Annual Water Department Report" (1924), p. 35; Houtz, G.M., "The Birth of Kalispell," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 16, 1934, p. 16.

²²"The Flathead Metropolis Has Made Great Progress," *Great Falls Tribune*, available in Montana - Kalispell - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, Montana.

²³Swanberg, A. V., in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

²⁴"Brief Local History Reproduced By Chamber of Commerce," *Kalispell News*, September 9, 1948.

²⁵*Daily Inter Lake*, November 20, 1949.

²⁶*Kalispell Graphic*, January 1, 1892.

²⁷Stannard, George, quoted in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 99.

²⁸Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

²⁹"Former Kalispell Man," *Flathead Monitor*, January 16, 1936, p. 8.

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By 1895, however, the demand for lumber was rising, and Flathead mills were working to capacity. Mill owners combined to send a representative to Iowa and other midwestern states to solicit workers, and several thousand easterners reportedly responded, many of whom became permanent residents of the Flathead. As the depressed economy revived, many people built substantial homes and business blocks in Kalispell. In the years 1899, 1900 and 1901 construction in the town boomed, with approximately 130, 200 and more than 300 homes built in those years respectively.³⁰ In 1901, according to the *Kalispell Bee*, "many of our residence buildings are artistic and modern, and would be ornaments to a city many times the size of Kalispell."³¹ From approximately 1907 until 1910 Kalispell was "on the boom," partly because of the anticipated opening of the Flathead Indian Reservation to the south for white settlement.³² Kalispell again experienced a building boom in the late 1920s, partly due to the impending completion of the highway across the Continental Divide at Marias Pass, and then another revival in construction as the Great Depression ended. From its early days, the Flathead Valley had been known as a healthful place to live. Quite a large number of settlers in both Kalispell and the outlying areas chose to move to the valley to improve the health of someone in their family. Although many of these people came to the Flathead from other states, some were Butte miners and their families who saw the Flathead Valley as an opportunity to escape working in the mines.

The Klondike gold rush of 1897-1898 helped the Flathead by providing a far northern market for local farm produce. At the same time, it drew away some of the young men of the area who dreamed of wealth in the form of gold in the Yukon. Kalispell residents were treated to the sight (and business) of "argonauts" streaming through on the Great Northern Railway to Seattle. Several carloads of Laplanders and their reindeer, part of a doomed government plan to transport food and mail in the Yukon, even arrived on the train and were delayed in Kalispell ten days, to the great interest of the townspeople. Great Northern employee Joe Rogers left Kalispell to go to Skagway, Alaska and work on the railroad that carried miners north to the Yukon, and several other Great Northern employees followed him north.³³

Another drain on the supply of young men in Kalispell was the Spanish-American War. Company H of Kalispell had about 65 enlisted recruits who went to the Philippines.³⁴ Although taking away laborers, the war also created a demand for horses and other supplies. Kalispell, as a division point on a transcontinental railroad, profited accordingly.

Kalispell served as the railroad division point between Cut Bank and Troy from 1892 until 1904, until the railroad route was resurveyed and the division point moved north to Whitefish. Kalispell's early history is therefore strongly linked to the railroad. In 1892 the railroad constructed service facilities in Kalispell including a depot, a water tank, a freight depot, a 10-stall roundhouse, a section house, an ice house and coal bunkers. Kalispell housed the division road master, the master

³⁰Houtz, G. M., "Enthusiasm of Kalispell," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 17, 1935, p. 6; Elwood, *Kalispell*, p. 32; "The Flathead Metropolis Has Made Great Progress," *Great Falls Tribune*, available in Montana - Kalispell - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, Montana; *Kalispell Bee*, December 20, 1900, p. 11.

³¹"Kalispell's Building Record for 1901," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1901, p. 12.

³²"Not Afraid of Kalispell," *Kalispell Bee*, January 9, 1906, p. 8.

³³Houtz, G. M., "Enthusiasm of Kalispell," *Great Falls Tribune*, February 17, 1935, p. 6; *Kalispell Bee*, June 19, 1900; "An Old Timer's Tale," *Inter Lake*, January 7, 1926, p. 2.

³⁴Swanberg, A. V., in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

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carpenter, the division master mechanic and the train dispatcher, and the Great Northern Railway payroll was the mainstay of Kalispell's economy.³⁵

The Great Northern Railway developed business by an active advertising campaign that encouraged people to settle in towns along its line. Thus the railroad was a large factor in building up commerce in the Flathead Valley. The trains hauled timber, minerals and agricultural products to near and distant markets. After the establishment of Glacier National Park in 1910, the railroad also promoted tourism in the area.

Unlike true "boom towns," Kalispell's population did not rise and fall dramatically during the historic period. Ever since the railroad arrived in 1892, the town has experienced gradual population growth, reflecting its relative stability and diversified economic base. In October of 1891, the population of Kalispell was enumerated preparatory to incorporating the town. At that time there were 645 residents living in the original townsite of 920 acres. Sanborn fire insurance maps listed the population in July of 1892 as 1,000 and in October of 1894 as 2,400. In 1895, the population of Kalispell was estimated in a promotional brochure to be about 2,500 people. The 1900 census showed the population of Kalispell as 2,526 (and of Flathead county as 9,375). In 1910, the city had 5,549 residents. Kalispell's population actually declined slightly by the 1920 census, to 5,147. Then it began a steady climb, reaching 8,245 in 1940.³⁶ In 1990, the federal population census put the population at almost 12,000.

Another early factor in the leading role of Kalispell in the Flathead Valley was its designation as the center of county government. From the establishment of Montana as a territory in 1864 until 1893, the upper Flathead Valley was part of Missoula County, with the county seat at Missoula. Flathead County was created in 1893, and at that time it included the entire northwestern corner of Montana (Lincoln County was formed in 1909 and Lake County in 1923). In 1894 Kalispell beat Columbia Falls by approximately 400 votes to become the county seat of the recently created Flathead County.³⁷

TRANSPORTATION, 1891-1942

Kalispell owes its existence to the laying of the Great Northern Railway track through the Flathead Valley. Access by train to distant markets allowed the new town to grow and become the regional trade center, serving the Flathead Valley and other parts of northwestern Montana and even nearby Canada. Other forms of transportation, however, have also played important roles in the development of Kalispell.

In 1891, the first year of Kalispell's existence, most people arrived in the new town from the south. The town's first residents would take the Northern Pacific Railroad to Ravalli (north of Missoula), a stage from there to the foot of Flathead Lake at Polson, a steamboat to the head of navigation on the Flathead River at Demersville, and then another stage to Kalispell. The trip from Ravalli to Demersville took approximately 20 hours.³⁸ Early settlers often recorded with pride not only the month and year of their arrival in the Flathead but also the name of the steamboat they arrived on.

³⁵Kalispell Graphic, December 28, 1893, p. 1; *Inter Lake*, May 13, 1892, quoted in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 7, p. 75.

³⁶"Articles of Incorporation of the Town of Kalispell," available in Montana Historical Society vertical files, Helena, MT; 1892 and 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Kalispell, Montana; "Kalispell and the Famous Flathead" (1895), p. 22, available in the Montana-Flathead County - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT; Sanders, Helen Fitzgerald, *History of Montana* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913), p. 755; "1970 Census of Population, volume i: Characteristics of the Population" available in Flathead County Library, Montana-Kalispell-Population file, Kalispell, Montana.

³⁷Baldwin, Major M. B., in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 142.

³⁸"The Fertile Flathead Country," *Northwest Magazine* (July 1891); Houtz, G. M., "Steamboating," *Great Falls Tribune*, January 6, 1935, p. 12.

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Although a wagon road had been carved out along the west side of Flathead Lake, it was very rough and had steep, difficult hills. The road was only used by freighters and a few settlers. By 1887 the water route had become established as both the easiest and cheapest way to bring supplies into the upper Flathead Valley, except in winter when the lake was sometimes impassable.

Until 1890, steamboat traffic on Flathead Lake was not heavy. This changed when the Great Northern began building its line through the Flathead Valley and on towards the west. All construction materials and workers were hauled from Ravalli by wagon across the reservation, then to Demersville by boat. The freight traffic, plus the increasing number of settlers, created a demand for more steamboats on the lake.³⁹ Early in 1891, two sternwheel steamboats with large cargo capacity were put into operation. Passenger facilities on these boats included private cabins, kitchen galleys, and dining salons, and they could navigate the run from Polson to Demersville in three hours.⁴⁰

There was no road on the east side of Flathead Lake until 1889. That road was completed in the 1910s, mostly by convict labor.⁴¹ By 1891 the Great Northern had built a very rough construction road over the Continental Divide at Marias Pass, but only a few people came into the valley along that route before the railroad began running.

The isolation of the upper Flathead Valley ended abruptly with the arrival of the first train on Jan. 1, 1892. Overnight, the barriers to travel into the Flathead were removed. For many years after that date, most people traveled to Kalispell by train rather than by steamboat or wagon road. Only those coming from the south (from Missoula or the reservation) continued to ride on the steamboats. The Great Northern and the Northern Pacific Railroads used the steamboats as a connecting link between the two transcontinental lines, and travelers often traveled west on one railroad and east on the other. Not all freight out of Kalispell originated in the upper Flathead Valley; some agricultural products from the Polson area were shipped across the lake by steamboat and then loaded onto Great Northern freight cars. The steamboats stopped at many small ports along the shores of the lake.⁴²

In 1900, the GNR built a spur line to the John O'Brien tie plant and mill at Somers. This line gave steamboat passengers immediate access to the railroad line, so boats no longer had reason to navigate the Flathead River to Demersville. The increase in north/south travel via the lake after the opening of the Flathead Indian Reservation in 1910 led to the establishment of separate passenger trains running twice daily. Passenger traffic on this spur line declined eventually, however, because of the increasing popularity of automobiles, and the service to Somers was discontinued in 1929.⁴³

The large boats on Flathead Lake were gradually replaced in the 1910s by smaller, faster boats. The *City of Polson*, launched in 1914, was considered the speediest boat; it could travel from Somers to Polson in two hours and 20 minutes. The Northern Pacific Railroad completed a branch line to Polson that opened in 1918. Even so, regular freight and

³⁹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁴⁰Houtz, G. M., "Steamboating," *Great Falls Tribune*, January 6, 1935, p. 12.

⁴¹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁴²Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁴³Elwood, Henry, *Somers, Montana: The Company Town*, (Kalispell, Montana: Thomas Printing, Inc.), pp. 33-34.

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passenger service ended on the lake in 1929, although lumber company tugboats continued to operate for another 20 years.⁴⁴ The federal highway along the west shore of the lake was completed soon after.

During their heyday, the Flathead Lake steamboats were an important part of valley life for social activities as well as for transportation. Steamboats provided excursions to picnic spots and moonlight dances on barges. Sometimes people would hire one of the smaller steamboats for a pleasure trip and operate it themselves.⁴⁵

At one point, Kalispell tried to imitate Demersville's earlier prosperity as the head of navigation. In 1907 plans were drawn up to make Kalispell a river port by dredging a channel from the mouth of the Stillwater River to the eastern edge of the city.⁴⁶ This channel was never constructed.

Once the railroad had reached the valley, the next challenge was to construct roads and bridges to make all parts of the valley accessible from the railroad. Most of the early roads were primitive. Until the steel bridge was built across the Flathead River in 1895 a few miles east of Kalispell, the east and west sides of the valley were connected only by ferries.⁴⁷

Horse and wagon remained the primary method of transportation within the Flathead Valley for many decades. By 1895, Kalispell had four livery stables. Several stage lines carried both passengers and freight. In 1901, stage lines ran from Kalispell to Dayton on the reservation and to Somers, Tobacco Plains and the Northern Pacific Railroad. All the stores delivered their products by horse and wagon. For example, the Pioneer Meat Market in 1891 had two wagons that delivered meat twice a week to their customers on the east and west sides of the Flathead River. In 1907, reported one old-timer, the main recreational activity of area residents was a horse and buggy trip.⁴⁸

An alternative to the horse for some was the bicycle. Kalispell residents joined in the nation-wide craze for bicycling that began in the 1890s and lasted until the automobile era. According to Charles O'Neil, an early Kalispell resident, the first shipment of safety bicycles arrived in the city in 1895 or 1896 (previously, some cyclists had owned the type with the large front wheel). In 1895, George Stannard advertised that he could repair both guns and bicycles. The *Inter Lake* reported in April of 1896 that the Kalispell Wheel Club was being organized, saying that there were already more than 75 "wheels" owned by individuals and more on the way. That same spring, the Montana News and Stationery Company advertised bicycles for sale on easy payments. O'Neil bought one, then learned how to ride on the city's wooden sidewalks. In addition to buying bicycles, people could rent them by the hour or day. They were initially used primarily for recreation, or "social wheeling." In the 1890s, bicycle races were held every summer Saturday at a track northeast of the railroad depot. O'Neil recalls group picnics of bicyclists at the head of Flathead Lake, in Bigfork, at the Soldier's Home in Columbia Falls, and elsewhere. He said that men would often escort their dates on a bicycle ride. Newspapers of the period frequently mentioned groups of cyclists going for a Sunday tour. A few Kalispell citizens even went on much longer

⁴⁴Elwood, *Train*, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 172; .

⁴⁵"Early Day Boats Were Steam Powered," *Kalispell News*, 1949 Progress Edition, Transportation Section.

⁴⁶Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

⁴⁷Isch, "Importance," *op. cit.*, pp. 22, 26.

⁴⁸Quoted in "Early Day boats Were Steam Powered," *Kalispell News*, 1949 Progress Edition, Transportation Section; Kalispell City Directory, 1901-02; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, January 3, 1895; Dickinson, E. F., "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, July 23, 1964, p. 6.

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tours, despite the poor conditions of roads in those days; for example, Arthur Hollensteiner pedaled to Fort Steele, British Columbia, and Reverend Falls biked through Yellowstone Park.⁴⁹

Bicycles were used for both recreation and work-related tasks. The City Council established ordinances to prohibit "scorching" (riding at high speeds) and requiring bells to be rung at intersections. Police Commissioner Johnson, himself bicycle-mounted, handed out fines to violators.⁵⁰

Kalispell residents enjoyed being on the main line of the railroad for 12 years. Many people who lived in Kalispell worked for the railroad in such jobs as dispatchers, office men, conductors, engineers, firemen, shop foremen, and general laborers. In 1904, the receipts at Kalispell were more than \$1 million, almost one quarter of the gross earnings of the Great Northern Railway (presumably in the state) that year.⁵¹ Then, in October of 1904, the Great Northern Railway changed its route west of the Flathead to take advantage of the lower summit elevation, less steep grades, fewer curves, and the necessity for fewer bridges on a new route that stayed in the north end of the valley. The original survey of the route west of Kalispell done by Charles F. B. Haskell had taken place on a quick trip in the middle of winter; Haskell had not had the time or opportunity to survey the route to the north that the railroad ended up preferring.⁵² The railroad division point changed to the new town of Whitefish, and about 300 Kalispell railroad workers and their families immediately packed up and moved by train to the new town carved out of the woods. Railroaders nicknamed Kalispell "Fishhook" because, so the newspaper reported, it was at the end of the line. Kalispell residents, on the other hand, referred to Whitefish as "Suckerville." Ironically, Kalispell served as the construction headquarters for the 4,000 men building the new line from Columbia Falls to Jennings.⁵³

The removal of the division point to Whitefish had a dramatic effect on Kalispell, and many of the town's businessmen feared that their businesses would go under. The day the last transcontinental train came through Kalispell, "The railroad boys hitched all the engines together and pulled out with the throttles all wide open and whistled as long as we could hear them. It was a sick looking crowd that left for home that evening." According to another account, "dejected citizens" watched the trains pull out and listened to "a long echoing wail of lament and goodbye to the loved town and the kind friends within it."⁵⁴

Kalispell had lost the "juicy" monthly railroad payroll, but it did remain on a spur line (served by a branch line train nicknamed the "gallopin' goose"). After 1904 no more transcontinental trains ran through town. A Kalispell reporter

⁴⁹*Flathead Herald-Journal*, September 26, 1895; *Inter Lake*, April 10, 1896, p. 8; *The Call*, March 19, 1896; Swanberg, A. V., in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 108; O'Neil, Charles L., "The Bicycle Craze in Kalispell," in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁵⁰O'Neil in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁵¹*Flathead County, Montana*, "The Coast 11 (January 1906), p. 3.

⁵²The reason for the relocation of the route has been debated ever since it occurred, but most agree that the tracks were moved for engineering reasons. W. C. Whipps felt that the Conrad brothers' "hoggishness in handling the town disgusted Jim Hill, and it no doubt had a great deal to do with Kalispell losing the main line of the railroad." - Whipps, p. 115.

⁵³"Have Gone to Whitefish," *Kalispell Bee*, October 4, 1904, p. 1; *Kalispell Bee*, October 25, 1904, p. 8; Elwood, Henry, interview with Kathy McKay, August 1992; "Kalispell Is the Hub," *Kalispell Bee*, March 3, 1903, p. 5; "Work for 4,000 Men," *Kalispell Bee*, March 10, 1903, p. 5.

⁵⁴"An Old Timer's Tale," *Daily Inter Lake*, January 6, 1926; Houtz, "Enthusiasm of Kalispell," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

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commented in 1935 that the commuter train to Columbia Falls ran "when the company pleased," and the connecting train returning to Kalispell "when the authorities wished."⁵⁵

The railroad did not remove the line to Bitterroot Lake because that lake provided a reliable source of ice for the railroad and of logs for the Somers Lumber Company. Tracks beyond Marion, however, were torn up. Several Pleasant Valley ranchers sued the company because of their loss of access to market, and the case was settled out of court.⁵⁶

Early Kalispell newspaper editor George Houtz stated in 1935 that Kalispell brought the loss of the division point upon herself. He said the leading citizens hired Abram Jaqueth, city engineer, to survey a route from Kalispell to the international line, hoping to take advantage of the Canadian Pacific trade coming through that point. They sent the results to Jim Hill and he realized the potential to build west of Columbia Falls along an easier grade and join the existing line at Jennings. The railroad sent A. N. Lupfer, some time prior to 1902, to make the final survey, using part of the Jaqueth survey. Construction on the new line began in 1902 but, according to Houtz, Kalispell residents continued to hope that the passenger line would still run through their town--that the Great Northern would, in essence, be a double track.⁵⁷

The town of Kalispell survived and even prospered, however, after the loss of the main line because of its already-established role as the trade center of a large area. After several months of lethargy, the town began to revive. With help from the county, the city improved wagon roads leading to and from Kalispell, a good road was built to Whitefish, stores carried "tempting stock," and the lumber industry increased in volume, helping to keep Kalispell an important shipping point. In 1910 the Flathead Indian Reservation was opened to settlement by non-tribal members. Kalispell was a registration point for those drawing for numbers in the selection of homesteads. As a 1909 newspaper article commented:

Main street of Kalispell is getting to look like a Donnybrook fair. There are shacks and booths of boards and canvass lining the street, where lunches are to be sold or the pilgrim is to be registered. The flood of new business houses overflows into First avenue east where there is a lunch counter and a number of registration booths.⁵⁸

Of the thousands who came through town then, many settled in Kalispell instead of on the reservation. Kalispell became the gateway and base of supplies for the settlers, and navigation on the lake revived. As Kalispell's promoters liked to state, "All roads lead to Kalispell."⁵⁹

In 1913, local newspapers reported rumors that Jim Hill might be planning to return through trains to Kalispell, but this never happened. Two spur lines did continue from Kalispell and served Somers and the Smith Valley to the west of Kalispell to Marion. By 1920, the Marion line ran on Fridays only. A route from Kalispell to Ravalli was surveyed in 1908 for a branch railroad line, perhaps inspired by the impending opening of the Flathead Indian Reservation to settlers,

⁵⁵Houtz, "Enthusiasm," *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸*Kalispell Journal*, July 15, 1909.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*; "Kalispell and the Famous Flathead Valley" *op. cit.*, p. 23.

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but this never materialized. The Somers and Marion branch lines were operated by Somers Lumber Company under lease from the railroad (which owned Somers Lumber Company) beginning in 1934.⁶⁰

Beginning in the 1880s, several Montana towns and cities had street railway companies that provided passenger and freight service both within and between communities. The same month that lots first were put on sale in Kalispell, the *Inter Lake* mentioned a report that an "electric line of railway" connecting the towns of Demersville and Kalispell had already been contracted for.⁶¹ This was never built, but it indicates the belief that such lines served communities well.

When Helena and Anaconda were competing in the 1890s to be the site of the state capital, Marcus Daly promised Kalispell that he would build a railroad from Anaconda to Kalispell if his city won. This too was never built.⁶²

Kalispell citizens began a campaign for an interurban railway in the early 1900s, the first known attempt being in 1904. A committee of 15 men formed to promote the line, but it never materialized. Then, in 1911, the Flathead Interurban Railway was incorporated with David McGinnis as its manager and principal booster. The incorporators planned to build an electric railway system connecting all the major communities in the valley. The initial route was to be from Kalispell to Whitefish. Farmers donated rights-of-way to the promoters and offered to help with the construction, and citizens purchased bonds to provide the needed capital of \$40,000. Ground was broken for the line at the southwest corner of the fairgrounds in October of 1911, with several hundred spectators as witnesses.⁶³ Then the project quietly faded away, perhaps because of undercapitalization and competition from the increasingly popular automobiles.

The first car to arrive in the Flathead Valley was a Maxwell Runabout, delivered to Hugh Thibodeau in 1905. Later that same day, according to one account, Dr. Morris Bottorf received a Franklin Touring car (Bottorf's wife Phebe, also a doctor, was the first woman in the Flathead to learn how to drive). Generally, doctors and merchants were the first to purchase automobiles.⁶⁴ Parts for these early autos had to be ordered direct from the factories, often taking weeks to arrive. Kalispell at first had no trained auto mechanics; motorists depended on blacksmiths for help, and thus blacksmith shops and liverys often evolved into car repair shops and dealers. For example, in 1907 Dr. Bottorf and partners bought a blacksmith shop on 1st Avenue East in Kalispell and turned it into a repair shop. A historic photograph of the Shaffroth and Michel shop during this transition period shows a sign advertising bicycle and automobile repair, bicycle rental, gun repair and auto supplies for sale.⁶⁵

The road from Kalispell to Libby was completed in 1913. The previous year, Frank Stoop, a Kalispell auto dealer and good roads enthusiast, drove with his wife all the way to Libby, startling people along the way who had never before seen

⁶⁰*Kalispell Bee*, August 26, 1920, p. 8; "Business Boom in Kalispell," *Kalispell Bee*, August 11, 1908, p. 1; "G.N. Would Resume Old Branch Lines," *Kalispell News*, April 9, 1942, p. 1; "Kalispell To Be on the Main Line," *Kalispell Bee*, November 17, 1913, p. 1. In 1942 the Great Northern filed application with the I. C. C. to resume operation of these two branch lines.

⁶¹*Inter Lake*, April 10, 1891.

⁶²Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁶³Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 146; "Kalispell Terminal for Electric Lines," *Kalispell Bee*, November 4, 1904, p. 1; "Flathead Interurban Is Progressing Nicely," *Kalispell Bee*, October 6, 1911, p. 1; "Work Will Start on the Railroad Monday Afternoon," *Kalispell Bee*, October 27, 1911, p. 1; "Ground-Breaking Meeting an Enthusiastic Affair," *Kalispell Bee*, October 31, 1911, p. 1; "Work Is Begun on Interurban Electric," *Kalispell Journal*, October 30, 1911, p. 1.

⁶⁴"Automobile History of Flathead," *Kalispell Bee*, June 19, 1919, p. 1.

⁶⁵Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124; "New Garage and Repair Shop," *Inter Lake*, November 1, 1907.

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an automobile. Early roads in the Flathead were rough-surfaced, single lane corridors, and one person remembers that it was "not unusual to see an owner towing his car home with a team of horses."⁶⁶

By 1910, 60 Kalispell residents owned automobiles and two owned motorcycles; the city passed an ordinance requiring automobile drivers to license their vehicles. The Flathead Motor Club was formed, partly as an advocate for good roads. In 1911 the new "park-to-park road" from Kalispell to Belton (West Glacier) was opened, with about 50 automobiles making the initial run. A state legislator commented that he had heard "hundreds of people speak of Flathead county on account of this road" and said "it will be the biggest advertisement that you can possibly get."⁶⁷ Flathead automobile owners often got together for social events, such as the 147 who motored to the Kelley and Evans summer home at Swan Lake for a chicken dinner in 1913.⁶⁸

By 1923, Kalispell had eight "large modern garages representing the leading manufacturers." In 1919, the Flathead Valley boasted about 2,000 automobile owners. The City Water Department Report for 1920 speculated that one reason the auto industry was doing so well in Kalispell was because the city was "the very center of all this loveliness" in the form of mountains, lakes and valleys to explore by automobile. In 1921, Kalispell had five motor agencies plus 12-16 automobile repair shops and a dozen licensed taxi drivers and oil dealers.⁶⁹

Horse and buggy and farm wagons remained the principal means of transportation, however, until after 1917. A bulk station company delivered gasoline by horse and wagon to local garages and to outlying farms. All the stores delivered their products by horse and wagon. In 1921 four stage lines still served the Kalispell area, including ones to Kila and the Pleasant Valley, Whitefish, Somers, Holt and Bigfork. Car owners bought gas in five-gallon cans in hardware or grocery stores or at hand pumps by street curbs.⁷⁰ After World War I, people could easily travel between Flathead Valley towns in one day by car. The county's new gravel road system encouraged rural residents to shop in Kalispell stores, with their greater selection and lower prices.

The development of the automobile industry and the improvement of roads in the Flathead Valley greatly increased the attraction of the area to tourists. Glacier National Park, once the exclusive domain of the wealthy who could afford long vacations, expensive railroad fares and extended stays at luxury hotels, was now accessible to the middle class. Kalispell promoters saw the opportunity this afforded their town, which they advertised as "the gateway to Glacier Park." The link between good roads and tourist revenue was clear. By 1928, Flathead County was advertising 16 dude ranches, two of them with Kalispell offices. Many of Kalispell's prominent citizens were part of the good roads movement, and local bicycle clubs, automobile clubs and farmers all contributed their efforts to the cause. As was the case throughout the United States, in the early 1900s virtually all of the roads in the valley were unsurfaced and were often impassable. By the early

⁶⁶"Find People Near Kalispell Who Never Saw an Automobile Before," *Kalispell Bee*, November 15, 1912, p. 1; Green, Charles, *Montana Memories* (Kalispell, MT: Thomas Printing, Inc., 1982), v. 3, p. 78.

⁶⁷"Many Autos in Kalispell," *Kalispell Bee*, September 27, 1910, p. 8; "The Flathead Motor Club Opens Park-to-Park Road," *Kalispell Bee*, September 12, 1911, p. 1.

⁶⁸Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁶⁹Kalispell Water Department Report (1920), p. 48; "Automobile History of Flathead," *Kalispell Bee*, June 19, 1919, p. 1; "Automobile Industry a Thrifty Business," *Kalispell Times*, July 14, 1921, p. 1.

⁷⁰Houston, Clinton, "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, November 21, 1963, p. 6; Stout, Tom, *Montana, Its Story and Biography* (Chicago, IL: American Historical Society, 1921), v. 1, p. 727; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 125.

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1920s, a route connecting all national parks had been signposted, but an interconnected concrete system of highways was not developed on a national level until 1930.⁷¹

As transportation in the area improved, Kalispell residents began to use Flathead Lake more and more for recreation. Well-to-do Kalispell residents, especially professionals and businessmen, bought lots on the lakeshore for summer homes. A. A. White of the original Kalispell Townsite Company bought land on the west shore and established the town of Big Arm. The Kalispell Chamber of Commerce advertised the charms of the lake and emphasized its "splendid" 110-mile highway.⁷² With improved transportation, Kalispell's elite traveled further to their summer homes. For example, several had houses on Lake McDonald in Glacier National Park. Many others spent their Sundays in the summer traveling to the park (the Apgar area) to enjoy its natural attractions.

Kalispell businesspeople built cabin camps and campgrounds to attract travelers to stay in their city and spend some of their vacation money locally. A 1922 newspaper article described a Kalispell "tourist camp" as having electric lights, oven, hot plates, washing machine and irons, wood ranges and ovens, tub and shower baths and shelter buildings for autos.⁷³ Tourist camps were followed by more substantial motor courts. These roadside businesses catering to Americans on the move were located primarily on Kalispell's Idaho and North Main Streets. Auto tourism ended temporarily, however, in 1942 with the war-time ban on passenger car production for the civilian market and the rationing of gasoline and tires. After the war, automobile tourism grew rapidly in popularity.⁷⁴

Many Kalispell residents built automobile garages on their lots when they purchased cars because they still needed to use their barns for horses (horses hitched to a cutter were still superior to cars in the winter time). Garages were built separate from houses, partly because of the danger of fire from the early automobiles, until the 1930s.

Kalispell had motorized taxi service and bus systems as well. The Kalispell-Whitefish Bus Line began operation in 1915, carrying both freight and passengers between the two towns. In 1921, buses served Bigfork and Swan Lake, and several automobile and boat lines also provided public transportation. In 1950 the branch line train from Columbia Falls to Kalispell was taken out of service and was replaced by a bus that met the trains at Whitefish.⁷⁵

The Theodore Roosevelt Highway over Marias Pass was completed in 1930. After the Going-to-the-Sun Road through Glacier National Park was completed in 1933, more and more visitors came to the Park by automobile rather than by train. In 1932, the federal highway connecting Missoula with Kalispell was completed. All of these highway projects increased Kalispell's accessibility and visibility, "putting Kalispell on the map" for automobile travelers.

Kalispell had airplane service fairly early. The city purchased a 137-acre aviation field in the fall of 1928, just south of the city limits. Soon, it was equipped with a runway and a hangar. Later, commercial air service was available at the county airport. Many valley residents had seen their first airplane years earlier in 1911 when Eugene Ely, a government aviation researcher, flew his bamboo framework plane at the fairgrounds for a demonstration. In the fall of that same year,

⁷¹Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, "The Flathead a Paradise," (ca. 1928), p. 11.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷³Bernard, F. N., "Kalispell, Queen of the Upper Flathead," *Daily Missoulian*, Souvenir Edition, July 20, 1922, p. 35.

⁷⁴Flink, James J., *The Automobile Age* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), pp. 169-186.

⁷⁵Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 264; Stout, *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 727; Elwood, *Train*, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

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Kalispell's own Chris Best, one of the owners of the Kalispell Malting & Brewing Company, flew his plane for the enjoyment of visitors at the Flathead County Fair.⁷⁶

ETHNIC HERITAGE, 1891-1942

The original inhabitants of the Flathead Valley were bands of Indians, primarily Kootenai during the historic period. Little reference is made in the historic record concerning the presence of Indians in Kalispell. In Demersville, the case had been different. There, two Indians were lynched in 1887 following the murders of three prospectors. Several other violent incidents occurred, and for a while black soldiers from Fort Missoula were stationed in Demersville to protect the citizens.⁷⁷

Harry Stanford, the first chief of police, recalled that in the 1890s the Kootenai were "much about," and he later missed the all-night chanting of the Kootenai and their rhythmic beating upon cottonwood logs.⁷⁸ Others mention tribal members camping in the swampy area east of town that became Woodland Park and in the poplar groves along Ashley Creek and Spring Creek, and fishing in the Flathead River near the steel bridge east of town. Very few were permanent residents of Kalispell in the early days. Census records show no Indians living in Kalispell in 1900. In 1910 there was one family of five (1/4 and 1/8 Indian) and in 1920 there were about 20 (one was married to a white and one family was farming).⁷⁹

A. V. Swanberg recalls that, "Many Indians used to come into town and walk up the alleys to see what they could lay hold of, and at times they would have a crowd in a vacant lot and gamble all day long."⁸⁰ Another source mentions that Indians set up lodges on the rock bluffs south of Kalispell and held ceremonial dances there. Children from Kalispell would go watch the dancing and sometimes would join in.⁸¹ Later, in the 1920s and 1930s, members of the Kootenai tribe camped near Kalispell, fishing on the rivers and lakes and providing services such as the exchange of hides for finished products like moccasins to area residents.

Because the Flathead Valley had been so recently settled when Kalispell was founded, virtually everyone in the new town had been born elsewhere. Many of the residents of Kalispell came to the area to visit family or friends and ended up deciding to move to the Flathead; this helped give Kalispell a strong "family town" feeling. Many of the early settlers of the Flathead Valley were first- or second-generation Scandinavians who had left the Midwest in search of cheap or free land in the West. An 1896 census of Scandinavian inhabitants of Flathead County (much larger then than it is now) found 270 males over 21 and 443 women and children.⁸² In 1900, Kalispell had over 70 residents who were born in Scandinavia

⁷⁶Kalispell Water Department, "16th Annual Water Department Report" (1929), pp. 18-19; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

⁷⁷Isch, "Development," *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

⁷⁸"Harry Stanford," *op. cit.*

⁷⁹United States Population Census, 1900, 1910 and 1920.

⁸⁰Quoted in Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁸¹Garvin in *Sagas, op. cit.*, p. 80.

⁸²*The Call*, September 17, 1896.

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(mostly Sweden or Norway). Ten years later, Norwegian immigrants numbered about 120, Swedes 60 and Danes 26. The 1920 figures for these groups were lower in proportion to the overall population.⁸³

In 1895, a promotional brochure stated that most of the area's residents were from Ohio, Illinois, Iowa or Nebraska, with some Germans and Norwegians from the Dakotas and also some Canadians.⁸⁴ This impression is verified by the federal census records, but many of the Germans and Scandinavians were also first-generation immigrants.

By far the largest group of immigrants who settled in Kalispell came from Canada, with French-speaking Canadians being only a small portion of this group. In 1910, Canadian immigrants accounted for over 250 of Kalispell's residents. In 1900, Germans were the next largest group (but they were outnumbered by Norwegians in the later censuses). Some people came from England, Scotland, Ireland and even Wales, and a handful represented other European countries such as Austria, Switzerland, Italy, France, Belgium, and Bohemia. (There were French women in the red light district.⁸⁵) In 1910, a Bulgarian railroad crew was boarding on the west side. Two Afghani brothers had a hot tamale stand in that year, and one of them was still in Kalispell in 1920. Russians were also represented in Kalispell. In 1900 there was only one listed in the census, but by 1910 there were 24 (8 from Poland) and in 1920 there were 19 (12 from Poland). In 1873, very early in the valley's history, a Russian Jew named Isadore Cohn had operated a store at Scribner. He went back to Russia planning to bring back a colony of Jews, but he never returned.⁸⁶

The agricultural depression of the 1920s, and the depression of the 1930s, did not affect the Flathead Valley as hard as other parts of the state, particularly the agricultural areas of eastern Montana. In fact, many of the farmers of the eastern plains moved via the Great Northern Railway to the mountain valleys of northwestern Montana, hoping to continue farming in an area with higher precipitation. These new Flathead Valley settlers soon discovered that precipitation in the area was erratic and that much of the rain and snow escaped downstream in the spring runoff. Between 1930 and 1940 the population of Flathead County increased by 26%, versus 10% for western Montana as a whole.⁸⁷

Census data tended to undercount non-whites, so the record for minorities in Kalispell is probably not very accurate. The Chinese, in particular, were undercounted because so many lived in underground tunnels. In general, though, the presence of a variety of ethnic groups in early Kalispell is clear. Many who did not actually live in town came to Kalispell to do their trading. The town was more heterogeneous in its early decades than it is today.

The Great Northern brought many Japanese, Italians and Austrians to the Flathead Valley to work on the Kalispell Division. The Italians were in the valley early, as a Kalispell saloon and lodging hall was referred to in 1892 as "headquarters for the dagoes who are employed on the railroad."⁸⁸ Only four show up in the 1900 census, and all were

⁸³United States Population Census, 1900, 1910 and 1920.

⁸⁴"Kalispell and the Famous Flathead Valley," *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁸⁵Swanberg, A. V., in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁸⁷Sundborg, George, "The Economic Base for Power Markets In Flathead County, Montana" (Bonneville Power Administration, Division of Industrial and Resources Development, October 1945), p. 11.

⁸⁸"First Fire!", *Kalispell Graphic*, November 16, 1892, p. 1.

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listed as railroad workers. Apparently, however, Japanese were preferred, as a newspaper reporter commented that Italian and Austrian workers were being replaced by Japanese who "give better satisfaction."⁸⁹

Although the Japanese worked for much lower wages than whites would accept, many white workers resented them. In 1898, when 100 Japanese were working above Nyack and 500 more were on the way, the *Inter Lake* commented, "This probably means that as far possible [sic] the Great Northern intends to displace white labor with Japanese on track work."⁹⁰ White foremen were not housed with the Japanese workers. In 1899 Kalispell contractor B. B. Gilliland built 30 3-room houses at stations on the Kalispell division for the use of section foremen. The houses were "put up on account of the employment of Japanese section men," reported the *Inter Lake*.⁹¹

The Japanese were hired and cared for by an employment agency called the Oriental Trading Company. This opened a Kalispell branch in 1899 (it formerly had been supplying Kalispell out of Seattle). The Company would pay workers' fares to the United States and then subtract regular payments plus interest from their paychecks. George K. Midzutani, a "well educated Japanese [who] speaks English very well indeed," managed the Kalispell store. In January of 1901 he had about 750 men working on the Kalispell division of the Great Northern. The company sold clothing to the workers, who had to pay the cost of goods but not the freight. The Japanese railroad workers commonly sent their earnings to Japan; in one month, \$3,000 was sent through the Kalispell post office. Midzutani described to a reporter the plans to build a hospital for Japanese workers with their own Japanese doctor. Men would be assessed 50 cents per month for medical attention and medicine. The company built a structure with an office and warehouse on the first floor and the top floors for the hospital. At the time, they had rearranged the Oriental Trading Company building to be a temporary Japanese hospital.⁹²

The 1900 census lists about 30 Japanese in Kalispell (some were railroad workers who happened to be in the hospital when the enumerator came through). All listed were either railroad workers or employees of the Oriental Trading Company (including a manager, office worker and two interpreters). There was a Japanese boarding house on the west side of town. In 1910, after the division point had moved to Whitefish, there were only six Japanese listed in Kalispell: railroad workers, a depot cleaner, and a cook in a private house. In 1920, two of the three Japanese living in Kalispell were married to French women.⁹³

Along with the Japanese section crews came Japanese camp followers. They are difficult to document, but the Kalispell newspapers occasionally mentioned their existence. For example, in 1901 two Japanese women were arrested the same week they arrived in town for "keeping a house of ill fame." Shortly after this incident K. Kabayashi, the manager of the Oriental Trading Company at that time, said there were 50-60 Japanese in Kalispell who were not connected with the company but were "camp followers" and "sports." He mentioned that this situation was demoralizing in other cities.⁹⁴

⁸⁹"Japs Preferred," *Kalispell Bee*, September 4, 1903, p. 8.

⁹⁰*Inter Lake*, October 14, 1898.

⁹¹*Inter Lake*, April 28, 1899.

⁹²*Kalispell Bee*, August 3, 1900, p. 3; *Inter Lake*, August 25, 1899; "The Japs Will Hang On," *Kalispell Bee*, January 17, 1901, p. 3; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁹³United States Population Census, 1900, 1910, 1920.

⁹⁴"Japanese Women in Trouble," *Kalispell Bee*, March 22, 1901, p. 3; *Kalispell Bee*, March 26, 1901, p. 3.

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The Japanese definitely lived outside of mainstream Kalispell society. They had their own store, medical care and crews. They lived in a Japanese-only boarding house. Only a very few worked for whites as house servants; a notable example was a Japanese man named Hori who worked for the Conrads and eventually set up his own businesses in Whitefish.⁹⁵

The Chinese had a longer-lasting and slightly more integrated presence in Kalispell, even though they mostly lived in designated Chinese boarding houses or underground dens in "Chinatown," on 1st and 2nd Avenues West.⁹⁶ The Chinese entrepreneur Ah Hay was a well-respected merchant and cafe owner in Kalispell. He eventually managed a number of restaurants along the Great Northern Railway line, as well as running an Oriental goods store and a popular restaurant in Kalispell.⁹⁷

The Chinese came to Montana beginning in the 1860s to work in mines or for railroad or supply companies. A fairly substantial percentage of early Chinese immigrants came from the Taishan (Toisan) area in modern Guangdong province (about 60 miles almost due south of modern Canton). The NPRR hired 15,000 Chinese to help construct the line through Washington, Idaho and Montana in the early 1880s.⁹⁸ Present data do not clarify the role that Chinese laborers had, if any, in the building of the line for the Great Northern Railway on the Kalispell division. The Chinese who came to the Flathead Valley provided a variety of goods and services, such as laundries, restaurants, stores (including Oriental goods stores), servants in private homes, cooks, gardeners, etc. Many of these businesses took little capital to start up. Many of Kalispell's Chinese had been in the United States for several decades.⁹⁹

In the mid-1880s, an anti-Chinese movement throughout the West caused many Chinese to flee to urban centers. The first Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882, prohibiting Chinese labor immigration for 10 years. A 1902 act banned all Chinese from entering the United States for temporary settlement purposes.¹⁰⁰

Demersville had at least one Chinese business, as evidenced by a photo showing the W. O. Lung Laundry on Gregg Street with Chinese writing on the sign. Kalispell was early on quite intolerant of Chinese. In June of 1891 "the people of Kalispell fired the one lone Chinaman who was looking for a location for a hash foundry in that town."¹⁰¹ The Chinese exclusion law enacted in 1882 did not affect scholars or merchants, but it did help inflame whites against Chinese. In 1895 Kalispell labor organizations launched a boycott against businesses employing or buying from Chinese (primarily restaurants and hotels), and many businesses specified in advertisements that they did not purchase from nor hire Chinese.

⁹⁵1900 federal population census, Kalispell, MT.

⁹⁶1900 federal population census, Kalispell, MT.

⁹⁷Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey (1992), inventory form for 142 1st Avenue East.

⁹⁸Swartout, Robert R., Jr., "Kwangtung to Big Sky: the Chinese in Montana, 1864-1900," *Montana Magazine of Western History* 38 (winter 1988): 28-39.

⁹⁹U.S. Federal Population Census, Kalispell Precinct, 1900, 1910 and 1920. According to Swartout (p. 47), the Great Northern employed very few Chinese, preferring to hire Japanese for even lower wages.

¹⁰⁰Wunder, John R., "Law and Chinese in Frontier Montana," *Montana Magazine of Western History* 30 (July 1980): 18-31.

¹⁰¹Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 269; *Inter Lake*, June 12, 1891, p. 3.

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Some boarding houses even replaced Chinese cooks with white men. This boycott began two years before the city of Butte enacted a similar boycott.¹⁰²

The "slant-eyed celestials" (as Asians were commonly called by contemporary newspaper reporters) did not all pack up and leave, however, for in 1896, according to C. D. O'Neil, there were about 150 in Kalispell, most living on 2nd Avenue West between 2nd and 3rd Streets. Most of these worked as cooks, waiters, merchants, laundry employees, gardeners and domestic help. Kalispell's Chinatown was riddled with dens, some extending 30' below street level. These dens were lined with shelves for the men to sleep on.¹⁰³

The 1900 census reported only 35 Chinese residents of Kalispell, although the number was probably much higher in that year. Their occupations were listed as house servants, cooks, laundry workers and owner, barbers, storekeepers, waiters, "capitalist," and restaurant owners and workers. Outside of Kalispell city limits, one Chinese man was renting a farm and had four Chinese laborers. In that year, most of the listed Chinese lived in a Chinese boarding house, but two were residents of an otherwise all-white boarding house (and not employees of it).¹⁰⁴

In 1901 Kalispell had four Chinese and Japanese goods shops, all located on 2nd Avenue West.¹⁰⁵ None of these buildings in the former Chinatown remain; they were burned (accidentally or by order of the city health officer) or torn down. Some of the underground tunnels, however, still remain.

Illegal Chinese aliens and the opium that many of them smoked were smuggled across the Canadian border, principally in the Tobacco Plains area, and brought to Kalispell. Kalispell officials periodically made opium raids and arrested Chinese they found in possession of the drug, also confiscating their "smoking tools." In 1902 Sheriff Hand stopped a group of eight Chinese he believed to have recently been smuggled across the border, and seven of them were returned to China (the eighth testified that he was a merchant, involved with a store in Butte).¹⁰⁶

Mixed marriages were uncommon, even though there were practically no female Chinese in the Flathead Valley. In 1901 Charlie Ling, a Chinaman, married Georgie McKnight. A 1909 state law prohibited the marriage of whites with blacks, Chinese or Japanese. By 1910, the 39 Chinese who remained in Kalispell were slightly more integrated with the community. In that year, five Chinese lived in houses on the east side of Kalispell. In 1920, three Chinese had been born in the United States and two were listed as married to whites.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰²*Kalispell Graphic*, May 15, 1895, p. 3, and June 19, 1895, p. 2; Swartout, *op. cit.*, p. 54. See *Flathead Herald-Journal*, July 4, 1895 and July 25, 1895 for statements on the Chinese boycott and the "Chinese question."

¹⁰³*Inter Lake*, February 28, 1954.

¹⁰⁴United States Population Census, 1900, 1910, 1920.

¹⁰⁵1901-02 Kalispell City Directory.

¹⁰⁶Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62; "Six Chinamen Chattering," *Kalispell Bee*, February 12, 1901, p. 3; *Kalispell Graphic*, February 27, 1895, p. 3; *Kalispell Bee*, October 24, 1913, p. 8; "Seven To Be Deported," *Kalispell Bee*, November 28, 1902, p. 5; "Chinamen Arrested in This City Sent to China," *Flathead Monitor*, November 28, 1902, p. 5; Clark, Anne, "Flathead's Early Welcome Did Not Include Orientals," *Daily Inter Lake*, June 11, 1989, p. D-1.

¹⁰⁷*Inter Lake*, June 13, 1901; Lang, William L., "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (April 1979): 57; United States Population Census, 1910, 1920.

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Early Kalispell residents frequently recall seeing a Chinese funeral and the procession on the way to burial at Demersville, and contemporary newspaper accounts all referred to burial of Chinese in Demersville. Today, however, the Oriental names on tombstones at the Demersville cemetery are all Japanese, not Chinese. It is possible that these Kalispell residents were confusing the Japanese and Chinese, but a burial site for the Chinese residents of the Flathead Valley has not yet been identified.¹⁰⁸

The Chinese in Kalispell may have been primarily from the Kwangtung region of China, like the Chinese in other Montana towns.¹⁰⁹ This common origin allowed social organizations to be based along traditional clan or district lines. The community's stress on clan and religion would have helped hold the group together. The New Year festival, for example, was celebrated traditionally in Kalispell. It is not known where the local temple, or joss house, was located in Kalispell.

The Chinese community in Kalispell, as in other towns in the western United States, disappeared as a result of laws prohibiting immigration and because the group was overwhelmingly male. By 1940, Flathead County reportedly had only two Chinese residents.¹¹⁰

Kalispell has never had a significant population of black residents. Brief references provide some information. For example, an 1893 obituary for Mrs. John A. White, who died of malaria, mentioned that her husband was a member of the colored company at Fort Missoula. A. V. Swanberg recalled two black minstrels who played banjos, sang and danced jigs every night in a Kalispell saloon (and the 1900 census lists a black man whose occupation was "dancer and singer"). In 1901, there was at least one "colored resort" in the red light district. The Flathead County High School enrolled its first black student in 1913, a sophomore from Boynton, Oklahoma.¹¹¹

Blacks numbered around two dozen in the 1900, 1910 and 1920 censuses. Their occupations in the 1900 census included janitors, train porters, servants, laborers, farming, washwomen, and hairdressers. Some lived in a boarding house that housed both blacks and whites. Others rented or owned their own homes. A group of eight black train porters lived together in a house on 4th Avenue West. One black couple owned a farm. Most of Kalispell's blacks in all these years had been born in southern states, and so the older generations were presumably freed slaves. The 1910 occupations of blacks were very similar, with one janitor living on the east side and one laundress working out of her home. The 1920 census revealed an interesting half-block on the west side, a small-scale non-white residential district. The half block on 7th Avenue West had three houses; one housed two black families, one housed an Indian family, and one housed an Indian/white family. One block to the east lived another Indian family.¹¹²

Despite the respect for certain black residents, local prejudice against blacks did exist. Old-timers remember some local restaurants displaying signs reading "No colored trade solicited." During the 1920s and 1930s (and probably earlier as well), black high school athletes had difficulty finding places to eat and sleep on road trips to Kalispell. The Ku Klux Klan experienced a general resurgence throughout the United States in the 1920s, and in 1928 a fiery cross burned on Foy's Hill

¹⁰⁸*Kalispell Bee*, November 9, 1909, p. 5; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, September 23, 1897; Mildred Rogers quoted in Elwood, Henry, "My Childhood in Northern Montana," *Kalispell News*, May 28, 1986.

¹⁰⁹Swartout, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹¹⁰Sundborg, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

¹¹¹*Flathead Herald-Journal*, August 18, 1893; *Kalispell Bee*, December 11, 1901, p. 2; *Kalispell Times*, October 30, 1913; Swanberg, A. V. in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹¹²United States Population Census, 1900, 1910, 1920.

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to celebrate the defeat of Governor Alfred E. Smith in the presidential election. In 1930, 500 Flathead residents heard H. W. Evans, Imperial Wizard of the KKK, speak in the Liberty Theater.¹¹³ Kalispell's blacks were so few in number, though, that they never constituted a social or economic threat to whites.

There were a number of Jews in Kalispell, "all very highly regarded," according to Judge Dean King. These included Philip Jacoby (jeweler), the Shulkin brothers (general store owners), Nathan and Abe Nathan (clothiers) and Gus Heller (saloon keeper).¹¹⁴

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, 1891-1942

Throughout the pre-World War II years the City of Kalispell had three main departments: street, water, and fire. City managers and even residents pointed with great pride to the accomplishments of each of these departments, particularly relating to the physical improvement of the city.

In 1904, under Mayor Sidney Logan, a large brick structure was constructed on First Avenue East to house the City Hall and the Fire Hall. At the time, there were only five city employees.¹¹⁵ This building was demolished in the 1970s.

The city's street department has had many responsibilities over the years, including constructing and maintaining the streets and alleys, snow removal, garbage removal, planting and maintenance of boulevards and parking lots, putting in drinking fountains, and the construction of sidewalks and sanitary and storm sewers. Property owners paid for the construction of many of these improvements.

Early photographs of Kalispell's streets show deep ruts and mud; the streets were referred to as "quag mires" and many cellars as "miniature lakes."¹¹⁶ In the few dry months, dust was a great problem. To combat the dust, a water-sprinkling wagon made regular trips through town from 1921 through 1925. The City soon developed a sewer and drainage system, but grading and maintaining the streets was a constant effort. Despite the laying of crushed rock on the heavily used streets, wagons could still get stuck in the mud. One Kalispell resident recalled that when he arrived in town in 1918 the streets were very muddy and "the ruts were as deep as the spokes were long" (he was referring to the wooden spokes on a 1915 Buick).¹¹⁷

¹¹³Elwood, Henry, "KKK Shatters Quiet Life in the Flathead Valley," *Kalispell News*, December 26, 1986.

¹¹⁴King, Judge Dean, "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, available in Montana Historical Society vertical files].

¹¹⁵Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

¹¹⁶*Flathead Herald-Journal*, March 19, 1896.

¹¹⁷Kalispell Water Department, "14th Annual Water Department Report" (1927), p. 36; Houston, Clinton, "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, November 21, 1963, p. 6.

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In 1925, after the defeat of a proposal to pave the entire east side, the city began oiling the streets (and was called "the pioneer of the cities of Montana in the oiling of streets"). By 1927 the City was oiling over 27 miles of streets. The first streets to have a hard surface were short sections of Main and of 1st Avenue East, done in 1912.¹¹⁸

In 1927 the City began a concerted effort to replace the old wood curbing with cement curbs; by 1927 over 22 miles had been constructed. At the end of 1927, approximately 2 miles of Kalispell's streets were paved, 13 miles gravel, 3 miles cinder, and the remaining 14 were dirt. By 1928 the city had its own rock crushing plant, located between two gravel washing and screening operations, and thus could obtain rock and gravel inexpensively.¹¹⁹

In 1925 the city passed an ordinance requiring pedestrians to cross the streets at the corners, within yellow lines painted for that purpose. A man was soon arrested for jaywalking; he "thought the yellow stripes were there to keep cars from colliding."¹²⁰

Kalispell for many years had angled parking in the business section of town. In 1955 parallel parking was enacted on Main and 1st Avenue East to reduce congestion. In addition, two parking lots were established at the same time.

In 1927, the City was not yet removing snow from the streets, only plowing the walks and keeping gutters and catch-basins open. The Street Department noted, however, that "with the gradual disappearance of horse-drawn vehicles and the increasing motor traffic, more attention will be paid in the future to the plowing of streets."¹²¹ This comment helps explain the persistence of carriage houses in Kalispell; many people, even those with automobiles, continued to maintain horse and wagon, particularly for use in the winter.

Until 1907, all of Kalispell's sidewalks were wooden and generally quite high (high enough for children to search beneath the cracks for coins). The first sidewalk was reportedly a 25' strip in front of the Kalispell Townsite Company office on Main Street. An 1895 newspaper article mentioned that inclined bridges connected the sidewalks and the streets; "One lady compared them to toboggan slides, and said she intended to take the middle of the street in walking."¹²²

The first concrete sidewalks in the business district, built in 1907, were in front of the Masonic Temple and Heller's saloon on Main Street. At this time, the city and private property owners were debating the various merits of cement versus brick sidewalks. The city sent representatives to tour northwestern cities and report back on the best methods of sidewalk paving. At a public meeting on the issue, J. H. Montgomery, the owner of a brick yard, advocated brick, saying he had used it at his home in Iowa more than 30 years ago and that he had a machine to make paving brick. Abram Jaqueth, city engineer and one of the people on the tour, advocated the use of concrete, and this opinion eventually won out. Jaqueth put in the first concrete sidewalk in Kalispell, along the north side of his residence at 501 3rd Avenue East, in 1906. By 1908, almost all of Main Street between 1st and 2nd Streets had concrete pavement on both sides, and the *Kalispell Bee*

¹¹⁸Kalispell Water Department, "16th Annual Water Department Report" (1929), p. 18; "History of Kalispell Streets," *Kalispell News*, 50th Anniversary Edition (1941); Kalispell Water Department, "14th Annual Water Department Report" (1927), pp. 33, 36; "History of the Kalispell Streets," *Kalispell News*, 50th Anniversary Edition (1941).

¹¹⁹Kalispell Water Department, "14th Annual Water Department Report" (1927), pp. 33-34; Kalispell Water Department, "15th Annual Water Department Report" (1928), p. 25.

¹²⁰*Flathead Monitor*, November 5, 1925, p. 8.

¹²¹Kalispell Water Department, "14th Annual Water Department Report" (1927), p. 36.

¹²²Scherf, Mrs. C. H., "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, July 18, 1963, p. 5; Macdonald, Dr. Alexander D., quoted in Elwood, *Kalispell*, op. cit., p. 131.; *Inter Lake*, December 6, 1895, p. 3.

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editorialized, "those few standing of plank ought to be condemned and at least one block of the main street show modern ideas." By 1920 the City had 23 miles of cement sidewalks, and only a few of the old wooden sidewalks remained.¹²³

W. C. Whipps, mayor of Kalispell for several terms, reports that he pushed various civic improvements on the City, but eventually citizens began to protest the high costs involved. He had the city buy a machine for paving the streets and his opponents threatened to blow it up. Whipps therefore hired an armed guard to stand over the machine in the city lots.¹²⁴

One of the influential people on the physical development of Kalispell was W. A. Powers, who founded the Kalispell Cement Works in 1907. He manufactured concrete locally at his plant on 2nd Avenue East and offered a wide variety of cement products for home and business owners, including cast concrete blocks, bricks, tile, curb, drains, piers, sidewalks, concrete business blocks and residences, pressed and ornamental concrete, foundations, porches, pillars and balustrades, fences, cellars, cisterns, sewer pipe, drain tile, etc. Many Kalispell residences built between 1907 and 1915 have foundations of cast concrete blocks manufactured by Powers. He evidently had a good reputation, for in 1911 he got the contract for the concrete work, including bridges and culverts, for the newly-designated Glacier National Park. The interior of Powers' office was furnished with concrete block railing and desks. This was no small backyard operation. Machinery at the plant included a hydraulic ramming machine (which he claimed to be the only one in the Northwest), a steam drying room, sewer and drain tile machine, and a lawn vase machine. In a 1912 advertisement, the company said "We Build Cement Sidewalks That Stay Put." Today, one can still see many of the WA Powers stamps in Kalispell's concrete sidewalks, with the date the walk was put down. Powers advertised concrete as "The Solid, Everlasting Building Material of the Future," absolutely fire proof. Ironically, in 1915 the Kalispell Cement Works plant was completely destroyed by fire. By 1917, according to the Kalispell City Directory, Powers had moved to Bigfork. Other thriving concrete contractors were also located in Kalispell, such as the Two-Miracle Concrete Company, which had its state headquarters in Kalispell.¹²⁵

For years there had been discussion of the "menace to the health and safety" caused by Spring Creek, which flowed south in a meandering path through the west side of Kalispell. A proposal had been made in 1925 to divert the stream to discharge in Woodland Park, but this plan was later dropped. In 1934 the city finally diverted the "foul old" creek, "a slowly moving cess pool," from the Great Northern right-of-way to Ashley Creek by a ditch. The next year, the fill was completed and people no longer had to cross bridges or worry about their children playing near the creek.¹²⁶

Kalispell residents over the years prided themselves on their parks. In addition, the town developed a number of parks, from the large Woodland Park on the east end of town featuring a city-maintained ice skating rink to several smaller ones; Lawrence Park on the north with tame deer, the Central School playground, Griffin Park with its baseball field (grandstand

¹²³Dickinson, E.F., "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, July 23, 1964, p. 6; Brinkman, Fred, "Buildings in Kalispell," file 13, folder 1, Brinkman papers; *Inter Lake*, July 13, 1906; "Brick Is Suggested As a Running Mate," *Kalispell Bee*, June 16, 1908, p. 1; *Kalispell Bee*, July 21, 1908, p. 3; *Inter Lake*, September 21, 1906; Kalispell Water Department, "7th Annual Water Department Report" (1920), p. 19; Kalispell Water Department, "15th Annual Water Department Report" (1928), p. 20.

¹²⁴Whipps, W. C., memoirs available at the Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT, p. 120.

¹²⁵"Kalispell Cement Works," *Daily Inter Lake*, November 14, 1910, p. 11; "A Very Important Manufacturing Industry in Kalispell," *Kalispell Journal*, March 31, 1910, p. 1; *Kalispell Bee*, June 13, 1911, p. 8; advertisement in *Kalispell Journal*, March 14, 1912; *Kalispell Times*, September 16, 1915; *Kalispell Journal*, March 13, 1911.

¹²⁶"Open Cess Pool Crosses West Side," *Kalispell Times*, July 9, 1925, p. 1; *Kalispell Times*, May 2, 1935; Bue, O.J., "Lure of Kalispell and Flathead Country," *Sunday Missoulian*, December 22, 1935, editorial section.

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and bleachers and 8' wire fence and canvas enclosure built in 1935), and Depot Park with weekly City-sponsored band concerts. Most of these parks were City-sponsored projects.¹²⁷

Kalispell was also known around the state for its boulevards lined with shade trees in the residential neighborhoods. In 1903 Kalispell residents voted on various options for planting trees along the streets, and the single tree line between the sidewalk and the street was approved. The next year, on the recommendation of a landscape gardener, the city decided to plant American elms on all streets, even though they had never been planted in Kalispell before. Plans changed slightly, as in 1905 both elms and maples were planted on the boulevards. On some streets, the city created central boulevards. On Woodland Avenue, the boulevard was 12', flanked by 26' wide "driveways" on either side, with room for a 6' walk and 12' strip of lawn "as on the other avenues."¹²⁸ During the summer the city watered and mowed the parking strips twice a week. Visitors to the city frequently complimented the city on its "strikingly noticeable" parking strips.¹²⁹

By 1928 the tree-planting program had diversified greatly. In that year, Kalispell's 5,000 shade trees consisted of Norway maple, cottonwood, ash, Siberian elm, thorn apple, fir, willow, pine, horse chestnut, poplar, mountain ash, catalpa and birch. By then, the cottonwoods were doomed, however, because they were "unsightly" and because their root systems were damaging the cement walks and sewer pipes. (In 1942, a WPA project removed more than 200 of the cottonwood and poplar trees in the residential section.). By 1936, there were 7,839 shade trees on 25 miles of parking strips.¹³⁰

Street lighting was also provided by the city, at cost to the property owners. In 1902, the *Kalispell Bee* noted that the old arc and incandescent electric lamps that had been used in Kalispell until then were being replaced and the "unsightly wires done away with."¹³¹ In 1910, in an effort to bring about a standardization of the "electroliers" used in the city, the Northern Montana and Idaho Power Company installed a hollow-frame street light on the Conrad National Bank corner. A year later, lights installed on Main Street carried the wires in conduits under the posts. In October of 1911 the City Council approved the installation of street lights that would have lights suspended in the middle of each intersection (and Mayor Whipps objected, saying the bulbs would "light treetops and birds' nests").¹³²

In 1930, the city reported that despite the national depression, for the past three years the City and Mountain States Power Company had erected large Christmas trees decorated with electric lights in the center of the city's main intersections. The city attracted statewide publicity for "dressing her business section in attire appropriate to the Yuletide."¹³³

In 1927 the City took on a major improvement project for the four half-blocks on the south end of Main Street north of the courthouse. A holding company was formed, Kalispell citizens bought the lots, and over a period of years public buildings and residences were built on the lots that had been considered a blighted area, trees were planted, sidewalks built,

¹²⁷Bue, O. J., "Lure of Kalispell," *op. cit.*; Kalispell Chamber, "The Flathead A Paradise," (ca. 1928), p. 27.

¹²⁸"One Tree Line System Wins," *Kalispell Bee*, April 14, 1903, p. 8; *Inter Lake*, June 19, 1903, April 15, 1904 and April 21, 1905; *Kalispell Journal*, July 13, 1911.

¹²⁹Kalispell Water Department, "15th Annual Water Department Report" (1928), p. 22.

¹³⁰Kalispell Water Department, "15th Annual Water Department Report" (1928), p. 21; "City Homes Are Being Brought Out In Relief," *Flathead Monitor*, January 30, 1942, p. 8; "Work on Civic Projects Goes On in Kalispell," *Flathead Monitor*, May 14, 1936, p. 1.

¹³¹*Kalispell Bee*, November 20, 1901, p. 4 and January 18, 1902, p. 2.

¹³²*Kalispell Bee*, September 23, 1910, p. 8 and October 31, 1911, p. 5; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

¹³³Kalispell Water Department, "17th Annual Water Department Report" (1930), p. 54.

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and a lighting system established. Kalispell architect Fred Brinkman designed many of the buildings that were constructed as part of this project.¹³⁴

The first efforts to provide Kalispell with water were private. The town's first water system consisted of two water tank wagons, one owned by Emory Walker and the other by Charlie Sheridan. The water was hauled from Spring Creek or the Stillwater River, and for 25 cents they would fill the barrels of anyone without their own well.¹³⁵ Many people did have wells on their lots, 12 to 16 feet deep, and the water was raised by pump or by bucket, rope and pulley.

In the spring of 1892 the City Council granted a waterworks and electric light franchise to a corporation composed of Boston, New York, Chicago and local capitalists. The contract contained a provision that the City might purchase the water works after 15 years had passed. The Kalispell Water and Electric Company was promoted and managed in the early days by Joseph Coram, a prominent Kalispell resident. The first couple of months the water service was not satisfactory; pipe joints leaked throughout the system, and the City ended up withholding payment for hydrant rentals until the problem was solved. The company was later sold to the Flathead Water Power Company, which became part of the reorganized Northern Idaho and Montana Power Company.¹³⁶

The question of whether or not the City should purchase the private water company became a political issue. In 1910 a Municipal Ownership Party formed, and W. C. Whipps was elected mayor on their ticket. Whipps subsequently promoted municipal ownership of the water, electric and telephone systems. In 1912, the Kalispell Water Commission, composed of prominent Kalispell residents, recommended that instead of buying the present waterworks system, the City immediately construct a new plant. The water company lowered its price, and in 1913 the City bought the system and made various improvements. The Water Department began metering consumption, while endeavoring to keep rates low enough to encourage people to water their lawns. A concrete reservoir was constructed on Buffalo Hill north of town and also a warehouse on 2nd Avenue East North. The first pumping station and power plant were located near the Stillwater River just north of town (and later burned). The municipal water plant was constructed in what is now Lawrence Park. By 1920, the City water system served 1,300 hook-ups.¹³⁷ Water mains were constructed of kalamein, wood and cast iron.

Kalispell had electricity by December of 1892, provided by the private Water and Electric Light Works. Until 1901, electricity was provided by a steam generating plant. In that year, the City contracted for electric power from the new power plant at Bigfork.¹³⁸

Telephone service came early in Kalispell's history and was again provided at first by the private water and electric company. In 1898, the *Inter Lake* reported, about 50 phones had been installed; "the lines work excellently, the exchange

¹³⁴Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey (1992), Courthouse Historic District Registration.

¹³⁵Business and Professional Women's Club, text of monthly broadcasts in 1948, available in Montana - Kalispell - History file, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT; Stannard, George, "The Early Story of Flathead Valley, Mont.," in Kalispell Water Department, "8th Annual Water Department Report" (1921), p. 44.

¹³⁶Kalispell Water Department, "1st Annual Water Department Report (1914), pp. 4-5, 10; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹³⁷Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 71; Report of Water Commission (1912); Kalispell Water Department, "1st Annual Water Department Report" (1914), pp. 25-29; Kalispell Water Department, "7th Annual Water Department Report" (1920), p. 19.

¹³⁸*Kalispell Graphic*, December 14, 1892, p. 2; Kalispell Water Department, "1st Annual Water Department Report" (1914), p. 9; *Kalispell Bee*, August 2, 1901, p. 3.

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will be a great convenience to the town."¹³⁹ Kalispell obtained long-distance telephone service to nearby states in August of 1910.¹⁴⁰

For many years the principal (perhaps only) crossing of the railroad right-of-way in Kalispell was at 2nd Street East. The Main Street crossing was not opened until 1908, at the urging of the Farmers' Protective Association which had its grain elevators just north and west of the crossing. In 1916, the railroad crossing at 5th Avenue East was opened. The railroad right-of-way was gradually levelled by the custom of filling low places with clay dirt from excavations around town.¹⁴¹

In 1900, all street corners in Kalispell received signs naming the streets and all the houses were numbered. Other attempts to create a sense of order in the town were less successful. For example, in 1893 a reporter commented that the City had an ordinance against cattle running at large, but that "Of late bulls have been allowed to roam the streets at will, and the bawling of milch cows and the calves replying is anything but conducive to peaceful slumber." He advocated requiring people with cows within the city limits to put them in charge of a herder during the day and pen them during the night. Another ordinance that was not strictly obeyed was that of 1910 banning outdoor privies. Outhouses remained a common sight in Kalispell back yards for many years.¹⁴²

The Police Department in Kalispell provided a number of services to the town besides law enforcement. They delivered coal to the poor in winter, for example, and attempted to enforce health regulations through clean-up campaigns. They also collected a monthly tax from prostitutes to supplement city revenues.¹⁴³

Kalispell's Volunteer Fire Department was organized in May of 1892, and the original equipment was all hand-drawn: two hose carts and a hook and ladder truck (no fire hose at this time because the city did not yet have a water system). The fire alarm system graduated from revolver shots to a bell clanging in a tower to a siren. In 1910 the City purchased a team of horses to pull the fire equipment, which was stabled at the rear of the station, and men were hired to be at the station 24 hours a day. By 1914 or 1915 the department had become motorized, and in 1916 it consisted of three paid men and 30 volunteers.¹⁴⁴

In 1909 the City passed ordinances creating fire limits. The inner fire limits were roughly bounded by the railroad right-of-way south to 8th Street and then from 2nd Avenue East to 2nd Avenue West. The ordinance prohibited construction of buildings made of combustible materials such as wood and required that the roofs be of tin, iron, slate or other fire-proof materials. It also prohibited repairing or enlarging wooden buildings within these limits or the moving of a wooden building from one lot to another within the limits. Another section prohibited the construction of wooden buildings anywhere in the city so close to any other building as to endanger it (excepting small outbuildings). Yet another section

¹³⁹*Inter Lake*, January 14, 1898.

¹⁴⁰Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

¹⁴¹"City Council," *Kalispell Bee*, January 7, 1908, p. 8; "Benefitting Fifth Avenue East," *Kalispell Times*, September 28, 1916; *Kalispell Journal*, May 2, 1910.

¹⁴²*Flathead Monitor*, February 23, 1900; *Inter Lake*, July 21, 1893, p. 4; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

¹⁴³*Montana Magazine of Western History* (spring 1983): 52-53.

¹⁴⁴Kalispell Water Department, "7th Annual Water Department Report" (1920), p. 14; Jack Price, "Demersville Had First Fire Department," available in Montana files, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, Montana; "Kalispell Fire Department Planning 45th Annual Ball," *Great Falls Tribune*, December 29, 1936, p. 5.

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stated that every building within the city where fires were intended to be used had to have at least one substantial brick or stone chimney, plastered inside and out.¹⁴⁵

Kalispell's fire department set fires as well as put them out. It had a significant role in the removal of structures considered unsightly fire hazards, some of them landmarks of Kalispell's early days. In 1930, for example, the State Fire Marshall condemned 16 buildings in and near Kalispell's business section. Fire Chief Uehlinger stated that "within a few months practically all of the old, unsightly wreck [sic] of former days will quietly slip into history." In all, about 48 structures were burned that year. When a gambling house built in 1891 was torn down in 1925, the *Flathead Monitor* commented that it was "practically the last of 1891 to go."¹⁴⁶

The front and back yards of Kalispell residents for many decades looked quite different than they do today. There were often several outbuildings with specific functions, such as privies, carriage houses, car garages, wood sheds, and chicken coops. Many residents kept chickens and other fowl such as turkeys (which may explain the prevalence of chicken wire fence in early photographs). Talking about the early days, one man recalled that "Many people had their own horse and buggy, kept a cow, and chickens, and raised hordes of house flies."¹⁴⁷ Most residential lots were fenced in some way, whether by simple sawn lumber, scrolled fenceposts, iron rail, or chicken wire. Most homes maintained gardens, generally with the vegetable plots in the rear and flowers in the front (hollyhocks were favored along the alleys and can still be seen there today). Almost every residential lot had a few fruit trees, especially apple. Hops (used for brewing beer) were raised behind many dwellings, and bee colonies were maintained at some. For a long time small dairies located within the city boundaries served Kalispell's residents (and in the early years, many people kept their own cow and pastured it on undeveloped city lots). An apple orchard was just south of the high school; many students walking to school would detour through the orchard to eat an apple on their way.¹⁴⁸ Most of the fruit trees, lilac bushes and gardens that used to be so common in Kalispell's residential districts are now gone.

In 1918, "most of the area around Meridian was farm land."¹⁴⁹ Today, one can still see evidence in this and other outlying areas of the city of their origins as farm property, such as numerous fruit trees and grape vines, recently constructed residences surrounding a turn-of-the-century house, etc. These farms so close to the growing city of Kalispell provided the city residents with produce, dairy products and fruit.

The efforts by the City of Kalispell to improve the physical appearance of the city paid off handsomely, not just in the quality of life of the residents but in Kalispell's reputation among travelers. A 1913 history of Montana described Kalispell as "generally considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in the state," mentioning its schools, churches, residences, business blocks, and the fact that one citizen picked 2,155 roses from his garden in one summer.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵City of Kalispell, "Revised Ordinances of the City of Kalispell, Montana, Approved July 24th, 1911," pp. 33-35.

¹⁴⁶"Tumble-down Shacks Doomed in Kalispell," *Flathead Monitor*, May 1, 1930, p. 1; Kalispell Water Department, "17th Annual Water Department Report" (1930), p. 17; "One by One Old Landmarks Go in the Discard," *Flathead Monitor*, April 9, 1925, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷King, Judge Dean, *op. cit.*

¹⁴⁸Elwood, Henry (local historian and resident of Kalispell since 1922), interview with Kathy McKay, January 1992.

¹⁴⁹Houston, Clinton, "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, November 21, 1963, p. 6.

¹⁵⁰Sanders, *op. cit.*, p. 755.

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Kalispell was known throughout the state for its attractive residential districts. In 1929, a writer commented in the annual Water Department Report, "I know of no other city the size of Kalispell which has as many miles of cement walks and curbs, nor one having so many beautiful trees and as many miles of well kept parkings, and in saying this, I speak with authority and from knowledge gained in traveling over the nation."¹⁵¹

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, 1891-1942

Until 1892, farmers and sawmill operators in the Flathead Valley produced only enough goods for the local market. When the Great Northern Railway steamed into the valley, however, Kalispell became the trade center for the valley and soon for the larger region. Soon, Kalispell had 150,000 acres of agricultural land tributary to it and thousands of acres of timber.¹⁵² Boosters advertised its great virtues, including timber and mineral resources, water power to enable it to be a manufacturing center, coal, agricultural lands, and great natural beauty. "All roads lead to Kalispell. Here the ranchman finds a market for his produce. Here the miner and prospector outfits for the mountains, and it is here that the vast lumber interests have their headquarters."¹⁵³

One of the most important early businesses in Kalispell was the Missoula Mercantile, renamed the Kalispell Mercantile in 1911. This business was the largest mercantile in northwestern Montana, and it provided virtually all needs of the settlers in the area, from fancy chinaware to agricultural implements. Until it closed its doors in 1980 the KM was one of the largest, most influential businesses in the Flathead Valley. The business was founded in 1888 in Demersville as a branch store. The company moved its store to Kalispell in 1892 when the Great Northern Railway came through town, and by 1910 it operated six warehouses adjacent to the railroad tracks. The company at that time covered territory from Cut Bank, Montana to Bonners Ferry, Idaho, along the Great Northern Railway line. Customers relied on deliveries by wagon, train and later truck to receive their purchases.¹⁵⁴

By December of 1892, Kalispell had a great number of businesses already operating and providing goods and services. These included basic suppliers such as general stores, groceries, hardware companies, clothing stores, et cetera, plus more specialized businesses, such as a piano and organ store, three photographers, and 11 legal firms.¹⁵⁵

Kalispell became the leader in the valley in terms of industrial and manufacturing firms, again because of its location on the main line of the Great Northern Railway. In the mid-1890s, Kalispell could boast of flour mills, a brewery, bottling works, six sawmills plus planing, shingle and lath mills, a pork packing plant, brick yards, a creamery, and a cigar plant. In 1908, wholesale houses included two hardware stores, three groceries, two liquor and tobacco dealers, and three dry goods

¹⁵¹Kalispell Water Department, "16th Annual Water Department Report" (1929), p. 26.

¹⁵²Sanders, *op. cit.*, p. 755.

¹⁵³"Kalispell and the Famous Flathead" *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁵⁴"Missoula Mercantile Company," *Daily Inter Lake*, November 14, 1910, p. 13; "Missoula Mercantile Company Transfers Its Holdings," *Kalispell Bee*, February 28, 1911, p. 1; "Big Firm Changes Its Name," *Kalispell Journal*, February 27, 1911, p. 1; Kalispell Water Department, "11th Annual Water Department Report," (1924), p. 28; Elwood, *Train, op. cit.*, p. 64; "Open House At Mercantile," *Kalispell News*, November 4, 1965, p. 2.

¹⁵⁵*Kalispell Graphic*, December 28, 1892.

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houses. A wholesale house was established in 1900 to distribute goods between Cut Bank and Troy.¹⁵⁶ By 1902, a Kalispell Business Men's Association had formed. Although quite a bit of business still left the valley and went to Missoula and Spokane, Kalispell became increasingly important in commerce and industry in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Kalispell businessmen catered to travellers as well as to residents of the new town. By December of 1892 seven hotels had already been constructed in Kalispell, including the West, the Caledonian, Pioneer, Scandinavian, Hoffman House, Parsons House and the Grand Central.¹⁵⁷ More would be constructed in the 1890s, both hotels and boarding houses.

Labor unions formed in Kalispell. By 1894 there was a local chapter of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen. The Federal Labor Union No. 175 of Kalispell in that year had about 600 members from Kalispell, with about 500 more from the county. There were unions serving the following occupations in 1902: barbers, brewery workers, bricklayers, stone masons, plasterers, bottlers, carpenters and joiners, cooks and waiters, flour and cereal mill employees, laundry workers, and painters, paperhangers and decorators.¹⁵⁸ The first organized effort to counteract union activity in the valley was the formation in 1902 of the Flathead Lumberman's Board of Trade. Laundry workers went on strike against the two main laundries in Kalispell in 1903, but they eventually conceded most of their demands and returned to work.

Much of Kalispell's prosperity has always been based on the rich agricultural resources of the Flathead Valley. The valley was first used for stock raising, as the early settlers believed that the land in the valley was not suited to any other purpose. Soon "some of the bolder spirits" experimented with raising grain, and their high yields led to the clearing of much of the valley for farming.¹⁵⁹

Successful farmers indirectly aided Kalispell by spending much of their earnings in Kalispell businesses. But there were also vital links between Kalispell and the outlying agricultural communities, particularly relating to the city's flour mills, creameries, butcher shops, and other businesses that processed and distributed (via train or wagon) raw goods produced on farms.

The Equity Supply Company Elevator and Creamery, which began as the Farmers' Protective Association, is one of the few businesses in Kalispell that still relies on the railroad for the transportation of its products. The creamery, elevators, warehouses, and store are still owned by Equity Supply Company. The company still uses all local grains (oats, barley, wheat) except for corn in its feed manufacturing.

Kalispell had several early flour mills, including the Kalispell Flour Mill and the Bjorneby Brothers Flour Mill. These mills were critical in providing a local market to area grain farmers and in employing large numbers of Kalispell workers. Several of the early mills burned; the Kalispell Flour Mill was purchased by Royal Milling Company of Great Falls.

Dairying in the county showed a steady growth. In 1915 the Farmers' Co-operative Creamery purchased the creamery of W. C. Wells. 1915 and 1916 were years of high agricultural production in the Flathead Valley, but they were followed by

¹⁵⁶"Kalispell and the Famous Flathead," *op. cit.*, p. 23; advertisement in *Flathead Herald-Journal*, May 21, 1893; *The Call*, May 28, 1896, p. 4; "Kalispell the Gateway to Flathead Indian Reservation - Fruit" (ca. 1908), available in Montana files, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT; Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, "We Invite" (1932), available in Montana files, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT.

¹⁵⁷"Progressive Kalispell," *Kalispell Graphic*, December 28, 1892, p. 2.

¹⁵⁸*Kalispell Graphic*, January 3, 1894, p. 1; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.; *Kalispell Bee*, May 10, 1904, p. 2.

¹⁵⁹Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, "Kalispell and the Flathead Valley," (1909).

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short crops with a scarcity of feed and hay from 1917-1921. Many Flathead dairymen were forced to sell their herds during those years. In the 1920s an organized effort was made to improve the quality of local dairy products. Kalispell merchants purchased locally, and a California market developed for Flathead butter because of its keeping qualities. From 1921 to 1939 the volume of butter produced in the valley increased fivefold.¹⁶⁰

The land to the south and particularly to the east of Kalispell (the Creston area) was particularly fertile due to its rich, sandy loam and is still the most desirable farmland in the valley today. These areas did not have heavy stands of timber on them, and so were settled and farmed early. In the 1910s, the Flathead Valley raised wheat and oats as its staple grain production. By approximately 1912, 350,000 fruit trees were growing on commercial orchards in the county. In the 1920s, about 60 farms were breeding and rearing fur-bearing animals such as fox, mink and chinchilla rabbits. The county led the state in potato production in 1927. In the 1930s, the valley's agricultural activities featured dairying, sheep raising, as well as the raising of oats, barley, rye, seed peas, clover alfalfa and all other small grains, plus a great variety of vegetables. Christmas tree production was an important industry in the valley by the 1940s.¹⁶¹

The cherry orchards along the shores of Flathead Lake was another important industry for Kalispell. In 1910 when the Flathead Indian Reservation was opened to homesteaders, the Department of Interior offered 21 groups of two-to-five-acre villa sites on Flathead Lake, 44 acres of which were designated as orchard sites (primarily for apples in the early years). Sweet cherries were in commercial production by 1920; by the 1940s the Flathead Lake area had become the fourth largest sweet-cherry producing area in the country. Some of Kalispell's residents had cherry orchards which they tended seasonally. Many cherries were shipped to Chicago in refrigerated railway cars. A cherry warehouse and packing shed was constructed in Kalispell in 1935, and the Flathead Lake Cherry Growers' Cooperative was founded the same year. The warehouse provided local seasonal employment, particularly for students, teachers and housewives.¹⁶²

Development along the railroad right-of-way in Kalispell reflected the importance of the community as a distribution center. Many large warehouses were constructed, including cold storage plants, and numerous businesses were located on spur lines of the railroad to be able to take advantage of easy rail transportation.

A 1935 tabulation of products shipped by rail out of the Flathead Valley shows that lumber and logs were by far the biggest item (accounting for over 2,500 railroad cars). General merchandise followed, then "ore," with flour, hay and wheat each shipping over 100 cars. At that time, Christmas trees accounted for 61 cars, cattle 85, and sheep 71. Of smaller items, various grains took up 53 cars, and fuel oil 36 cars. Potatoes filled 26 cars and seed peas 36. Beer kegs were shipped in 3 cars.¹⁶³

Kalispell's banking institutions reflect the prosperity of the community. The first bank in the valley was the Flathead Banking Company (later the Globe National), which opened in Demersville in 1890. Soon after, W.C. Whipps was sent to Demersville to organize the Northwest Bank. Charles E. Conrad and William G. Conrad organized the Conrad National Bank in 1891, the next year constructing a brick and stone building on Main Street (destroyed by fire in 1959). Moving to Kalispell when it was established, Northwest Bank competed with C. E. Conrad for the name First National Bank and won.

¹⁶⁰Kalispell Water Department, "12th Annual Water Department Report" (1925), p. 55; "Dairying Is Progressive Industry of This Valley," *Kalispell News*, March 22, 1939, part 4, p. 9.

¹⁶¹Sanders, *op. cit.*, pp. 751-752; Kalispell Chamber, "The Flathead A Paradise," (1924), p. 9; Isch, "Development," *op. cit.*, p. 97; Bue, *op. cit.*

¹⁶²H. A. E. R. documentation for Flathead Lake Cherry Growers' Warehouse.

¹⁶³Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, "Annual Report of the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, 1935," p. 18.

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In 1892, Kalispell had three banks, the Conrad National (renamed the First Interstate in 1981), the Globe National (absorbed by the Conrad National in 1894) and the First National (now Norwest Bank). Other banks formed in the early 1900s later consolidated with the First National.¹⁶⁴ The nation's banks went through great turmoil in the financial panic of 1893, and the Globe National Bank went under in 1894.

One of the important, and exciting, early ventures of Kalispell businessmen was the formation of several companies to investigate the oil prospects in the Kintla Lake area of the North Fork of the Flathead River (this area is now within Glacier National Park). The Kintla Lake Oil Company and the Kalispell Oil and Development Company formed in 1901 and 1902 respectively, and local newspapers devoted much space to their construction of derricks and drilling efforts.¹⁶⁵ The Kalispell investors were not alone, for Butte, Anaconda, Helena and Great Falls capitalists also investigated the fields. Prospecting in the area began in 1892 by people from Columbia Falls and the Tobacco Plains areas, and Kalispell businessmen became interested and filed claims on coal and oil, as well as placer and quartz claims. The panic of 1893 stopped the activity until 1900. In that year, a rough 50-mile wagon road was constructed to the oil fields at Kintla Lake by the Butte Oil Company (one of its original investors was Fred Whiteside of Kalispell). Montana's first significant oil boom had begun. Commercial production could not be obtained, so after the initial excitement and high hopes further development was not undertaken. Also in the Flathead area were deposits of clay suitable for pressed brick, beds of marl for making Portland cement, and gypsum for plaster and slate.¹⁶⁶

In 1901, a mining prospector discovered oil in the Swiftcurrent area east of the Continental Divide. Several new companies were organized to develop the oil field. Production declined soon, however, and the field was abandoned. These early crude oil discoveries and the short-lived booms in Kintla Lake and St. Mary's Lake districts "served to draw the attention of the inhabitants of this state to a new mineral." Thus, with the exception of the Elk Basin discovery, all exploration work during the early stage of Montana's oil industry was financed by Montana people.¹⁶⁷

During the 1920s, Montana's crude oil industry was dominated by development and production of the Kevin-Sunburst field. The Kalispell Kevin Company, formed by Kalispell and Kevin investors as an independent operator, paid outstanding dividends after only a few years of production. During the first part of the 1920s the company paid a return of 2,400% on each original \$500 investment. Lee Kerr, Charles Emmons and other Kalispell residents profited handsomely from their investments in these oil fields. The Kevin-Sunburst field reached its maximum production in 1926, declining thereafter.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴"Progressive Kalispell," *Kalispell Graphic*, February 29, 1892, p. 1; Skidmore, Bill, *Treasure State Treasury* (Helena, MT: Thurber Printing Co., 1985), pp. 43-44; Groth, Clarence W., "Montana Banking History, 1864-1954," (June 1955); Baldwin, M.D., in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 144. The history of Demersville and Kalispell's early banks is conflicting, but it appears that the Conrad National Bank was the first in Kalispell, although soon the other two banks offered competition.

¹⁶⁵"Kintla Lake Oil Co," *Kalispell Bee*, October 26, 1901, p. 1; *Kalispell Bee*, January 11, 1902, p. 8.

¹⁶⁶"History and Prospects of Flathead County's Oil Fields at Kintla Lake," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1901, p. 8; Douma, Don, "Pre-Commercial Phase of Montana's Crude Oil Industry, 1864-1919," *Montana Magazine of Western History* 3(autumn 1953): 19-20.

¹⁶⁷Douma, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21, quote from p. 22.

¹⁶⁸Douma, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

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LUMBER INDUSTRY, 1891-1942

For many decades the city of Kalispell was the center of the lumber industry in the Flathead Valley. In 1910, in fact, Kalispell was the center of the lumber industry in the entire state. By 1928, about 40% of the lumber manufactured in Montana was produced in Flathead County mills.¹⁶⁹ Kalispell's role in the lumber industry helped the community maintain a leading position in the economic development of the region.

The market for Flathead Valley lumber remained strictly regional until the arrival of the railroad in 1892. The railroad revolutionized the lumber market both by providing transportation to distant markets and by its own voracious demand for ties for roadbeds and timbers for trestles. Montana's mines also required large amounts of timber to support the underground shafts, and smelters required timber for fuel. Sawmills and lumber companies sprang up in western Montana in response to these markets and improved means of transportation. At first, most of the trees logged were fir and larch, with some white pine for a specialized market.¹⁷⁰ The industry was highly competitive, and lumber prices fluctuated greatly, reflecting changes in the national market.

A number of sawmills dotted the valley in the early days, run by water power or steam. The first sawmill in the Kalispell area was water powered, run by John Foy in the early 1880s at Foy's Lakes west of town. John Evirs had a small sawmill on the Stillwater River about a mile and a half north of what would become the Kalispell townsite. Once the Great Northern Railway came through the valley in 1892, the logging operations in the valley became large and well established, due to the expanded market. By 1895, the valley had seven saw mills plus planing, shingle and lath mills.¹⁷¹

In the early years, mills owned timber lands in the valley and logged much of it off. Logs were cut and decked along the river banks in the winter and the mills were busy through the summer and fall. Some of the mills floated their timber down rivers during spring high-water river drives to the mills. Eventually, some of the logging operations had railroad spurs built into the woods to haul logs on flatcars to the mills. Some of the larger operations, such as Boorman's eight miles west of Kalispell, employed large crews year-round.¹⁷²

Early in the 1900s, three logging firms dominated the market: the Northwestern Lumber Company, the State Lumber Company, and the John O'Brien Lumber Company (later the Somers Lumber Company). In 1901, there were 21 sawmills within 20 miles of Kalispell. By 1909, there were 30 sawmills tributary to Kalispell, with a total annual cut of 150 million board feet. These "lumber interests" shipped about 3,500 railroad cars of lumber annually. They were all organized into the Montana Larch and Pine Manufacturers' Association based in Kalispell. In 1928, approximately 3.5 million acres of timberland in the Kalispell area were managed by national or state forests, with an additional 1.3 million acres of privately owned timberlands.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹Isch, "Development," *op. cit.*, p. 4; Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, "The Flathead A Paradise of Grandeur and Opportunity and Kalispell the Distributing Center," (1928), p. 7.

¹⁷⁰Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

¹⁷¹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 156; "Kalispell and the Famous Flathead" *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁷²Elwood, Henry, "Early Sawmills," *Kalispell News*, April 9, 1986, p. 3.

¹⁷³"Kalispell's Buildings Record for 1901," *Kalispell Bee*, December 18, 1901, p. 12; Great Northern Railway, "The Fertile Flathead Valley" (1909), p. 21; Kalispell Chamber, "The Flathead a Paradise" (1928), p. 7.

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The John O'Brien Lumber Company was started as a result of an agreement between O'Brien and Jim Hill of the GNR where by O'Brien would supply the railroad with three-cornered treated railroad ties and the railroad would build and maintain a spur track from the main line to the mill at the head of the lake. The mill began to operate in 1901. Logs were driven down the Stillwater, Whitefish, Swan and Flathead Rivers, then hauled by company tugboats to the millpond in Somers Bay. Besides ties, the mill also produced boxes, had a sash and door plant and produced lumber. All these products were marketed in the Flathead and other areas along the Hi-Line in Montana and North Dakota. The Great Northern purchased O'Brien's interest in the mill in 1906 and the name changed to Somers Lumber Company. The peak of the mill operation was in 1937, when there were 375 men processing timber there. The mill closed in 1948 and the planer in 1949. For the nearly 50 years it operated, the mill was the largest sawmill in the Flathead Valley and had the largest single payroll.¹⁷⁴

Kalispell's first sawmill, the Butte & Montana Company, was built on the Stillwater River in 1891 by a Boston organization, and this later became the site of the Northwestern Lumber Company mill. The original mill sawed and planed timbers for its Butte mine and their Great Falls smelter and supplied timbers for Great Northern Railroad bridges being constructed through the valley. The company purchased extensive timber belts in the area, including land around Whitefish Lake. In 1893, it advertised that it had the largest lumber yards and mills in the Flathead Country. They dealt in lumber, lath, shingles, moldings, sash, doors and building paper, and the office was located at the corner of Main Street and Fourth Street (where O'Neil Lumber Company was later located). In 1895, the Butte and Montana Mill had a capacity of 150,000 board feet per day. Sometime between 1901 and 1903 the company went into receivership and James Coram, superintendent since 1893, bought the mill and operated it as the Coram Lumber Company. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1903.¹⁷⁵

Frank Lebert set up a planing mill and finishing machinery soon after he arrived in the valley in 1891. His equipment included a lath saw and the machinery for making 26 different kinds of molding.¹⁷⁶ W. P. McMannamy, another early Kalispell lumberman, started his planer mill in 1890, located on what would become 7th Avenue West and 11th Street. A 1901 newspaper described the complaints of residents near the mill as follows:

...the air is constantly filled with soot and cinders and the careful housekeeper is in despair..and the spotless linen becomes likened unto a leopard skin.¹⁷⁷

Lebert & McMannamy joined forces and in 1894 were shipping much lumber to eastern Montana. In 1895, they arranged to put in a mill on the Stillwater on the site of the old Kalispell Lumber Company's mill. In 1905 McMannamy built a sawmill about eight miles west of town which supplied the logs for his planing mill. McMannamy closed the sawmill in 1918 and sold the planer.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴Elwood, *Kalispell*, p. 208; Elwood, Henry, *Somers*, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁵"The Butte and Montana - Kalispell's First Saw Mill," *Kalispell News*, 50th Anniversary Edition (1941); Isch, "Importance of Railroads," *op. cit.*, p. 26; *Inter Lake*, May 5, 1893, p. 6; "Kalispell and the Famous Flathead" *op. cit.*, p. 23; 1894 and 1899 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

¹⁷⁶*Inter Lake*, April 24, 1891, p. 3.

¹⁷⁷*Kalispell Bee*, May 17, 1901, p. 3.

¹⁷⁸*Inter Lake*, March 1, 1895, p. 3; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-158.

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The Lebert & Burns sawmill was built in 1898 by Frank J. Lebert (who was later joined by Alfred H. Burns). This company had a millpond behind a dam on the Stillwater River just north of Kalispell (the dam had been built to provide water power to the Kalispell Industrial Company flour mill). In 1903 the planing, saw and lath mills were located next to the dam, and the yards had an average of three million board feet in stock.¹⁷⁹ The partners sold the sawmill to a group of lumbermen from Thief River, Minnesota, who formed the Northwestern Lumber Company with C. L. Dobner as president. This mill burned in 1911. A year later, the O'Neil Lumber Company bought all the lumber in stock and the planer and other buildings for close to \$100,000, planning to construct or lease a new mill on the site. According to a newspaper report, O'Neil planned to continue the retail side of his business out of Main Street, with the new purchase handling the wholesale trade. Residents of the Flathead were "elated to learn that the O'Neil Company and not some outsider has bought out the Northwestern for the fact tends towards more substantial conditions."¹⁸⁰ In 1916, the Somers Lumber Company purchased the mill site, flowage and nearly 15,000 acres of timber on the upper Stillwater from Northwestern Lumber.

There were a number of other lumber companies in the Kalispell area that provided both wholesale and retail lumber. The State Lumber Company was originally located on the Whitefish River north of Kalispell until 1923 when it was moved to an area west of Columbia Falls. The Kalispell Lumber Company sawmill was established in the 1890s and operated a sawmill and planer until the 1950s. The business, located on the west edge of town, was a major employer for decades, and it still continues in business under new owners as a retail operation.¹⁸¹

Another very important lumber company in Kalispell was the O'Neil Lumber Company which began business in 1895. The company was located on Main Street in Kalispell. A 1939 advertisement for O'Neil Lumber mentioned that they offered unpainted built-in furniture, Lehigh Portland concrete, roofing, shingles, insulation wood from Hawaii, mahogany from the Philippines, etc. The company remained in business as a family operation until 1980.¹⁸²

In 1929 a lumber company formed in the Flathead Valley that offered a new product: ready-cut buildings. The Superior Building Company was incorporated by E.J. Crum and W. W. Loy of Kalispell and C. L. Green of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Crum told a reporter that the company had located in the Flathead because of its unlimited supply of timber. According to the Flathead Monitor, "The factory will specialize in putting up ready-built garages, water tanks, houses, silos and barns. The buildings are ready to be put up without nails or studding and without the aid of skilled carpenters, in a few days time." The article continued, "It is thought that with the many summer homes being built in the Flathead there will be a large demand for these easily constructed houses. Three men, common labors [sic], are able to put up a four-room house with bath in three days time, having it ready for the plasterers." The company's 26'-long lathe could cut out materials for a garage in "but a few minutes."¹⁸³

When the Superior Building Company constructed its first building in Kalispell, a garage at 419 2nd Avenue East, the newspaper described the process for the benefit of its readers. According to the paper, there was not a nail used in the sidewalls. The garage had a patent steel corner lock. "The two-inch sidewall material is grooved and gradually tappers [sic] from the groove to the tongue side of the board in a manner that gives a perfect siding effect when the building is erected."

¹⁷⁹1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

¹⁸⁰"Northwestern Lumber Company Sells to the O'Neil Company," *Kalispell Journal*, April 29, 1912, p. 1.

¹⁸¹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

¹⁸²*Kalispell Times*, August 31, 1939.

¹⁸³"New Building Company Is Incorporated," *Flathead Monitor*, April 25, 1929, p. 1.

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The company purchased a sawmill in Columbia Falls and converted it to a factory to manufacture the materials, but its office was located in Kalispell. The company soon received requests for estimates from many states as well as other places in Montana. Crum, the manager, emphasized the relatively low cost of their buildings and said they were particularly suitable for small houses. They could manufacture garages, cottages, houses of all sizes, water tanks, silos, granaries, etc. The company developed a limited line of small ready-cut houses of both simulated log and "conventional" design. During the early 1940s they went out of the field to concentrate on lumber production to meet the heavy demands.¹⁸⁴

In the early 1900s, loggers worked for \$30 a month plus room and board. Many were of Scandinavian, German or French-Canadian ancestry. They lived at the logging camps and so did not see their families often.¹⁸⁵ The logging camps created a home market for local farmers' produce, meat, fruit and dairy products. Logging in Montana was seasonal, with the work beginning in October and lasting four to six months. Many men who worked in the woods held other jobs during the summers.

Some of Kalispell's most influential citizens were the logging contractors, responsible for employing many people. One of these was Henry Good, contractor for Somers Lumber Company, whom historian Henry Elwood identifies as the man who "probably more than any other single person helped to shape the logging industry in the Flathead for nearly three decades". From 1902 until 1929 Good's workers logged along the Stillwater River northwest of Whitefish.¹⁸⁶ Another important logging contractor in Kalispell was George Slack.

The lumber industry suffered a serious economic depression in the years just prior to World War I because builders were increasingly using cement and steel. To reduce costs, loggers were often laid off. The Flathead Lumberman's Board of Trade was organized by the mill owners to prevent loggers and sawmill workers from organizing. In 1902, the local Federal Labor Union had about 600 Kalispell members.¹⁸⁷

In the spring of 1907, the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) sent an organizer to the Flathead to organize the logging industry workers and an I.W.W. Hall was established on West Second Street. [According to one labor historian, I.W.W. halls "offered sympathy, understanding, and fellowship in place of the saloon, cheap boardinghouse, and the prostitute" to the lumber worker "profoundly conscious of his inferior social standing".¹⁸⁸ The I.W.W. organized general strikes intended to shut down the Pacific Northwest lumber industry in 1917 and again in 1919. Their demands included better living conditions in the camps, higher wages and eight-hour days. The 1917 strike began in Eureka, north of Kalispell, and spread across the Northwest to become the "most spectacular and widespread" lumber strike in the United States. Both sides refused to negotiate. In Whitefish and Columbia Falls, federal troops were called in to handle striking lumber workers. Tensions were high as America entered World War I, and in 1917 the Kalispell City Council passed a sedition ordinance that made it illegal to advocate or incite disrespect for "any ordinance of the City." Soon, I.W.W. headquarters, local halls and private residences were raided in 31 cities (none were in Montana, however). The strike ended in September of 1917. Local suppression, the use of federal troops, federal and state prosecutions, and a newspaper

¹⁸⁴"New Ready-Cut Lumber Industry," *Flathead Monitor*, August 22, 1929, p. 2; Sundborg, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁸⁵Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 159.

¹⁸⁶Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 167.

¹⁸⁷Rader, Benjamin G., "The Montana Lumber Strike of 1917," *Pacific Historical Review*: 189-207.

¹⁸⁸Rader, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

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campaign, combined with heightened war-time patriotism, broke the strike. To attract strikers back to work, Montana lumbermen as a group began to improve camp conditions, and wages were increased to \$3.75 per day.¹⁸⁹

In 1923 practically every logging camp in the Flathead again went on strike for an eight-hour day and a better wage scale and living conditions. The strike began against the Somers Lumber Company and the Henry Good camps but soon spread. According to the *Flathead Monitor*, at that time the Flathead was the only district in the entire Northwest that had not instituted the eight-hour day for loggers.¹⁹⁰

The Flathead Valley logging industry became steam-powered in 1910 with the introduction of steam "donkeys" for use in the woods. Horse teams, railroads and river drives were replaced in the 1930s by motorized logging trucks, changing the industry dramatically. The last river drive of logs on the Flathead River took place in 1931.¹⁹¹

ARCHITECT-DESIGNED BUILDINGS, 1891-1942

Kalispell's first building was erected in May of 1891.¹⁹² Kalispell buildings constructed in the spring and summer of 1891 were typically hastily constructed, one-story wood frame buildings (typically with false fronts if a business building). Larger buildings, such as hotels built during that first, hopeful year, have all burned or been torn down. By the fall of 1891, however, residents were constructing more permanent buildings, such as brick business blocks.

Like other small cities in Montana, Kalispell has enjoyed the services of professional architects since its founding. A large number of the town's pre-World War II-era business blocks, residences and public buildings such as churches and schools were designed by architects residing in Kalispell. Brief summaries of the impact of Kalispell's most influential architects--Frank Morgan, Joseph Gibson, Alfred Pearmain, George Shanley, Marion Rizzo, and Fred Brinkman--are given below (more detailed biographies are provided on the appropriate inventory forms). Kalispell also had a number of accomplished builders who influenced the physical development of the city greatly. The biographies of Louis Woll, Brice B. Gilliland and Caesar Haverlandt are on the inventory forms for their primary residences.

Several other architects, or part-time architects, worked in Kalispell for short periods. In the 1890s, Alfred Jones and Robert Forrey advertised as architects and submitted designs on a number of buildings, but little is known about them or their work except for the evidence of a few buildings they designed.

Franklin Madison Morgan was born near Louisville, Kentucky, in 1842. He worked as a carpenter and then as an architect and was a pioneer resident of a number of western towns. Morgan reportedly built the first log cabin and later the first brick building in Billings, Montana. The Morgans later lived in Miles City and in Great Falls, where he supervised the building of the first business blocks and residences. Frank Morgan designed the Conrad Block on Main Street that housed the Fitch drug store for many years (it was destroyed by fire in the 1980s). He also built the West Hotel, which was

¹⁸⁹Rader, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-207; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 161.

¹⁹⁰"Lumber Workers Strike 100 Per Cent," *Flathead Monitor*, December 13, 1923, p. 6. Rader, however, says on p. 207 that early in 1918 the government-sponsored Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen moved into Montana and brought the government-imposed 8-hour day.

¹⁹¹Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁹²"Kalispell and the Famous Flathead," *op. cit.*, p. 21.

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demolished in the 1920s but was a large hotel near the railroad depot. Morgan moved to Spokane for health reasons, and later to Montrose, California, where he passed away in 1934 at the age of 92.

Arthur Pearmain came to Kalispell to supervise the construction of the Charles E. Conrad residence, Kalispell's showcase Shingle-style residence built in 1895. Although the house has been credited to Kirtland K. Cutter of Spokane, Pearmain evidently was involved in the design as he is consistently listed in Kalispell newspapers as the architect or the man who designed the house, and he worked for Cutter during that period. Interestingly, both Pearmain and Conley, the Spokane contractor who came over to supervise the work on the Conrad house, ended up deciding to locate in Kalispell. Pearmain subsequently designed quite a few houses (and the original Webber hospital) in Kalispell, most of which no longer exist or have not yet been identified. The MacDonald house at 344 6th Avenue East was designed by Pearmain and built by Conley. It has completely lost its original appearance, however, as in the 1920s the owner hired Fred Brinkman to "change the architectural style," which he did quite successfully, converting it to a gambrel-roofed residence. Pearmain remained in Kalispell a few years, then returned to Spokane where there were more opportunities for architects. He passed away in 1902.

Joseph Gibson's career as an architect seems to have peaked in 1910, when he designed the new Conrad block on Main Street and several residences, including his own at 461 E. California Street. He worked as a civil engineer for the city and also had an architectural practice. Gibson designed some prominent Main Street buildings, such as the YMCA and the Masonic Temple, as well as more modest business blocks. Most of the residences he designed are classic examples of large Craftsman-style houses. He also designed residences and businesses in other Montana towns. Gibson passed away in 1918 at the age of 54.

George Shanley was originally a partner of Joseph Gibson. Together, they designed and supervised construction of a number of Kalispell's business blocks of primary significance. Shanley also designed the Carnegie Library (for which his father was the general contractor) and St. Matthew's Church. Shanley moved to Butte in 1904, later settling in Great Falls where he became quite well-known.

Marion Rizzo arrived in Kalispell in 1908, a young easterner competing with Joseph Gibson. He was immediately involved in the town's musical community, as he was a violinist and band leader of considerable talent. Soon, he began to get jobs as an architect, and he designed a great number of the businesses and residences still standing in Kalispell, including the Liberty Theater, the Kalispell Hotel, and the Dobner/Elliott House. Rizzo died in 1921 at the age of 42.

The week after Rizzo passed away, long-time Kalispell master carpenter Gus Brinkman traveled to Billings to convince his son Fred, an architect, to return to Kalispell. A few months later, Fred Brinkman set up his practice in Kalispell, and he maintained his practice for the next 40 years in Kalispell. More than any other single person, Brinkman influenced the physical appearance of Kalispell today. His prolific practice was responsible for buildings in virtually all of the architectural styles that were popular from the 1920s through the 1950s. When Kalispell's original wood frame churches were replaced with masonry structures, Brinkman was the architect. He designed new schools and additions to existing schools. Rizzo had designed the original Sisters of Mercy Hospital; Brinkman designed the addition. Many of the residences on the east side of Kalispell and a few on the west side were planned by Brinkman. Fred Brinkman passed away in 1961.

Some of Kalispell's building contractors were well known in the city and beyond for their attention to quality. B. Brice Gilliland, for example, constructed many of Kalispell's residences and churches and at least two of the town's hospitals, as well as the Lake McDonald Lodge in Glacier National Park. Lewis Woll's most noted construction project was St. Matthew's Church. Some builders specialized in brick construction, such as the Stahl brothers, and others in residences, such as Caesar Haverlandt. Some of these contractors purchased lots in town and built residences on speculation,

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sometimes living in the houses with their families until they sold. All of Kalispell's builders worked in a variety of styles, generally using pattern books to help their clients decide on designs.

INFLUENCE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, 1891-1942

As in other western counties, the federal government has had a large impact on Flathead County and the development of the natural resources located there. Thousands of acres of land surrounding the Flathead Valley, including the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park, are managed by the federal government. The Federal Building on 1st Avenue East (now the county library and the headquarters of School District 5) is the most obvious physical reminder of the importance of the federal government in Kalispell.

The Federal Building, constructed in 1917, originally housed the post office, the Blackfeet National Forest offices, the U.S. Land Office, the U.S. Weather Bureau, and the Post Office inspector. Before that, the post office had operated out of five different buildings in the business section of Kalispell. City delivery was established in 1902, and in 1903 four Rural Free Delivery routes out of Kalispell were established. The U. S. Land Office was established in 1895, allowing settlers to make final proof on their claims in Kalispell rather than Missoula, and the weather bureau organized in 1898 in Kalispell. The Land Office was discontinued in 1925.¹⁹³

The construction, indeed the location, of a dam that would capture some of the waters of the Flathead River was hotly debated in the 1920s through the 1940s. In 1927, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bonneville Power Administration, and the War Production Board drew up plans to build a dam at Grand Coulee to provide flood control and irrigation for Washington State. One possible site for an upstream dam to collect water for this project was the South Fork of the Flathead River and a narrow canyon east of Columbia Falls. Many years of political jockeying and debate ensued. The Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, recognizing the potential economic benefits of the project, became ardent supporters of the dam. When the Army Corps' 1943 plans to build a dam at Flathead Lake that would raise the lake 37' became known, however, residents of Kalispell were shocked and angered. Harry Kelly and other Kalispell residents mounted a campaign against the proposed project that defeated the idea, replacing it with Hungry Horse Dam. Only after World War II was both political support and funding for a dam at Hungry Horse mustered, and work on the dam began in 1947.¹⁹⁴ Work on this dam brought an influx of people to the valley, and many remained after its completion in 1952. Although many stayed in the north end of the valley, quite a few moved to Kalispell after their work on the dam was completed.

In 1897, President Cleveland, despite much criticism from Montanans, established the Lewis and Clark Forest Reserve covering vast areas surrounding the Flathead Valley. In 1908, this reserve was divided into the Blackfeet and Flathead National Forests. In 1933, the Blackfeet was eliminated, being divided instead into the Flathead and Kootenai National Forests. Headquarters for these forests were based in Ovando and soon in Kalispell. Many Forest Service employees over the years have lived in Kalispell (some only seasonally as they were stationed in the backcountry for long periods of time). The government thus provided both local employment and purchased a great deal of goods and services from communities in the Flathead, particularly during busy fire seasons.

In 1910 part of the Blackfeet National Forest was designated as Glacier National Park. The Kalispell Chamber of Commerce and some Kalispell residents actively protested the creation of the Park, wanting to maintain full rights to the

¹⁹³Baldwin, M. D., in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 142; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 59; Ingalls, Emma, "Over Trails of the Past," in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 136.

¹⁹⁴Culbertson, William M., "The Fight for Hungry Horse Dam," *Journal of the West*, pp. 68-77; Isch, "Development," *op. cit.*, p. 98.

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natural resources of the area.¹⁹⁵ The mandate for management of this area focused on recreation, but a number of concessions were made to those demanding the right to exploit its resources. The establishment of the Park had a great impact on Kalispell, which by 1930 was considered the gateway to the Park and benefitted from the tourists passing through the area on their way to the national park. The federal highway program also helped make Kalispell accessible to out-of-state travelers.

The history of the settlement of the Flathead Valley is also directly linked to the availability of homesteads through federal programs. Many of Kalispell's early residents were attracted to the area because of the possibility of proving up on homestead claims and thus obtaining land inexpensively. People took up homesteads wherever possible, such as in the North Fork of the Flathead, in the woods in the Libby area, and on the Flathead Indian Reservation when it was opened for settlement in 1910. Quite a number of these homesteaders proved up on their claims in five years, obtained title from the government, sold their land (often to timber company buyers), and moved to Kalispell and opened a business or built a residence with the profits. Other government programs, such as the sale of University school land and the Stone and Timber Act attracted settlers to the Flathead Valley. Some homesteaders worked in lumber mills in the Flathead part of the year, worked as gyppo loggers, or took seasonal jobs with the new Forest Service. By 1885, according to early homesteader Tyson Duncan, the "settlers were coming in fast."¹⁹⁶

The Flathead Valley had a strong connection with the Butte and Anaconda area in its early years, mostly because of the availability of homestead land. Many Butte miners had homesteads in the upper Flathead and would live on their claims in the winter and then leave their wives and children in the Flathead Valley to prove up on the claims while they returned to their jobs in the mines. They would then make cash entry proof on their claims. These miners may have had other motivations in coming to the Flathead, such as escaping the health and safety hazards of the mines. The area was also known to the Butte mine owners, not just the miners. During the Depression years, the influx of well-to-do Anaconda Copper Mining Company executives such as Con Kelly and their guests to their summer homes on Swan Lake brought much-needed cash to the Flathead Valley.¹⁹⁷

During the depression, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) projects on federal lands in the Flathead area were numerous. CCC crews run by "Local Experienced Men" did a great deal of road and bridge construction, fire fighting, snag removal, administrative site construction and so on. Materials for these projects were purchased locally as much as possible, helping Kalispell's economy.

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects approved in 1935 included the improvement of Woodland Park and 41 miles of alleys. The diversion of Spring Creek was completed in 1934 by over 60 men employed through the civil works committee.¹⁹⁸ Another important WPA project was the construction of the Kalispell, Whitefish, and Polson golf course club houses.

¹⁹⁵Oppedahl, R. James, "Conflicts Between Resource Development and Preservation at Glacier National Park" (M. A. Thesis, University of Montana, 1976).

¹⁹⁶Duncan, Tyson, typewritten manuscript (1923), p. 5, available in Montana files, Flathead County Library, Kalispell, MT; Garvin, Dorothy, "This and That About the Flathead," in *Sagas*, p. 78. An 1892 amendment to the Timber and Stone Act allowed all public lands to be entered. This allowed lumbermen to purchase valuable timberland at minimum cost by using dummy entrymen.

¹⁹⁷This general trend in homesteading patterns was noticed in the process of researching this project. The Butte connection was confirmed through conversations with various people with relatives who moved to this area from Butte, including Elizabeth Paul, interviewed March 18, 1992. Henry K. Good of Kalispell described playing with the children of Butte executives in the 1930s (August 1992).

¹⁹⁸Bue, O. J., *op. cit.*; "65 Women to Be Given Jobs in Flathead," *Flathead Monitor*, December 21, 1933, p. 1.

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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, 1891-1942

Cultural

During the pre-World War II period Kalispell had a handful of writers (but no known artists) who were known beyond the immediate area for their works. Nationally known author Frank B. Linderman lived most of the time at his house on Flathead Lake, but he and his family resided in Kalispell for a few years in the 1920s while he managed the Kalispell Hotel. Margaret Scherf, the daughter of a Kalispell schoolteacher, published her first mystery in 1940, and her children's book *The Velvet Box* received national recognition. Her novel *The Wedding Train* is based on early life in the Flathead. She taught creative writing at the University of Montana, and between the years 1940 and 1978 she published 32 books. Another author was Therese Broderick, who wrote articles and short stories and published a popular book called *The Brand*, a novel about early life in the Flathead Valley and relations between Native Americans and whites. She also organized and for ten years directed the Kalispell Dramatic Club, which used local talent and gave many benefit shows for churches. Its performances, held in the McIntosh Opera House, included minstrel shows, operettas, Japanese fetes, and pageants.¹⁹⁹

Many of the cultural activities in Kalispell's first few decades were held in the McIntosh Opera House on Main Street. Kalispell businessman John McIntosh built the Opera House in 1896, with an addition in 1903. The upper floor served Flathead Valley residents as an opera house (seating capacity 1,000), lodge meeting hall, a gymnasium, ball room, theater, roller skating rink, high school graduation auditorium, and so on. The Opera House hosted many traveling theater groups. As in other Montana towns, performers would arrive by train and would bring with them elaborate costumes and scenery. One of the first shows was "Little Lord Fauntleroy." Eugene Debs, labor leader and Socialist candidate for president, spoke at the Opera House in 1902. The building reflected the municipal pride of Kalispell's citizens at the time it was built. The need for a large hall diminished as the local schools built auditoriums and gymnasiums and as movie theaters replaced most live dramatic productions.²⁰⁰

Kalispell also had a number of movie theaters, the first constructed in the 1910s. The Liberty Theater was built in 1920, and its owner Marius Anderson formed a partnership with his son Carl and with Roy McDaniels to manage the Liberty, Princess, and Orpheum Theaters (all the theaters in Kalispell) for many years. The first "talkie" movie was shown in Kalispell in 1929. In 1936, Anderson built another theater in Kalispell called the Roxy.²⁰¹

Health Care

One of the first needs of any new community is health care. Early medical practitioners in the Flathead faced many difficulties, such as the hardships of travel and the lack of hospitals and other facilities.

Demersville during its boom days had three resident doctors; Kalispell in the early days also had several physicians as well as other types of healers (these included a "practitioner of magnetic healing," a Japanese doctor, a Chinese herbal healer,

¹⁹⁹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-9; Trethewey, Grace B., "Therese Broderick, Novelist," *Montana Treasure* (August 1950); "Mrs. Broderick Dies," *Daily Inter Lake*, June 19, 1958, p. 1.

²⁰⁰Elwood, *Train*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

²⁰¹"Marius Anderson," *Kalispell Times*, May 28, 1936.

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and osteopathic physicians).²⁰² In addition, quite a few nurses were available to take care of people in their homes. Some of the early doctors in the Flathead Valley were essentially company doctors, working on contract for the Great Northern Railway or one of the major lumber companies.

Kalispell used several different buildings as hospitals over the years. For a few years before the railroad division point was moved to Whitefish, the Oriental Trading Company, labor contractor for Japanese railroad workers, operated a Japanese hospital at the corner of 1st Avenue West and 4th Street. There, Dr. T. Shoami from Yokohama treated as many as 16 patients at a time. Those with severe injuries or diseases were treated at hospitals under contract with the railroad.²⁰³

Nurse Ella Webber built Kalispell's first hospital, on the corner of 4th Avenue East and Center Street, in 1895. The city outgrew this building and its several additions, and in 1902 and 1904 Webber built a much larger building on lots to the south. This two-story structure was converted to the Fernwell Apartments and remains apartments to this day.²⁰⁴

From 1905 until 1909 local physicians, with financial help from the business community, organized a new hospital and operated it at two different locations (one, on 1st Avenue West, is now the Rosebrier Inn). When the sponsoring organization went out of business in 1909, two of Kalispell's doctors opened a hospital on 3rd Avenue East.²⁰⁵ Through the efforts of the Business Men's Association, the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce and W. G. Conrad, the Sisters of Mercy Hospital first operated out of the old hospital on 4th Avenue East and then opened in a large new building on 5th Avenue East in May of 1912. Half the construction costs were raised by Kalispell residents. The hospital also provided a three-year nurse training course from 1913 through 1931. The hospital became county facilities in 1976 when the Kalispell General Hospital was constructed on Buffalo Hill just north of town.²⁰⁶

Funeral homes also played an important role in Kalispell, as in other communities. Since its founding, Kalispell had several competing morticians. Pre-World War II funeral homes in the Flathead Valley shared several characteristics. They were generally family-run, with the children involved in the business. The morticians and their families lived in or very close to the business building. Undertakers usually established branch offices in other towns in the Flathead Valley. In the 1890s, undertakers sometimes supplemented their business with other occupations. For example, George McMahon in 1896 advertised himself as a "dealer in new and second-hand goods, upholstery, undertaking and embalming."²⁰⁷

Most of Kalispell's early funerals were conducted out of the deceased person's residence, as was the practice throughout the United States in the 1800s. The undertaker's primary role was as a provider of funeral and mourning paraphernalia such as a casket, chairs, drapery, door badges, stationery, and flowers. After about 1900, undertakers began to take on new roles as the providers of services, not just of material goods. American funeral directors thus evolved from the role of storekeepers simply providing merchandise and equipment to that of licensed professionals providing a variety of services to their communities. At the same time, three separate functions--the laboratory, the residence, and the chapel--were

²⁰²*Kalispell Bee*, March 31, 1905, p. 5; Kalispell City Directories, 1901-1906; "Well Known Chinese Cook Joins His Ancestors," *Kalispell Times*, September 12, 1946.

²⁰³Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

²⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 131.

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 132-134.

²⁰⁷Advertisement in *The Call*, March 12, 1896, p. 1.

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consolidated in the funeral residence run by a funeral director.²⁰⁸ Kalispell's two competing funeral homes, Sherman & Son and Waggner & Campbell, each constructed large, residence-like mortuaries in the commercial district of town in the late 1920s.

Religion

During Demersville's brief heyday, one church served all congregations. Soon after Kalispell was founded, citizens began meeting in residences and planning the construction of churches of various denominations. Just four years after its founding, Kalispell had five churches.²⁰⁹ Kalispell's early religious structures were fairly simple one-story wood frame buildings. Several churches were clustered on 3rd Street East at the corners of 2nd and 3rd Avenues East. Today only two remain, both post-1950 structures. The churches in 1901 were Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran (German and Norwegian), Methodist Episcopal (Epworth, Kalispell Mission and Scandinavian) and Presbyterian. In addition, the Salvation Army had a barracks.²¹⁰ In 1910 St. Matthew's Church was designed by George Shanley, and it set the stage for new styles to come. After World War II, several of the original wood frame churches were replaced with masonry structures.

A 1913 survey of the religious preferences of Kalispell residents revealed that the largest numbers were affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Christian, Catholic, Scandinavian Lutheran, Baptist and German Lutheran churches, in that order. This had not changed much from a similar listing made in 1898.²¹¹

Kalispell residents enjoyed Chautauquas, programs of religious and educational study, held in the McIntosh Opera House or in large tents in the summers. Members of the Epworth Methodist Church began an effort to obtain land for these summer gatherings and thus the town of Chautauqua (now Lakeside) on Flathead Lake was born. After a successful on-site meeting in the summer of 1897, the group was plagued with organizational and financial difficulties. "Chautauqua circles" continued to meet for some time, but the lakeside property was never used as its promoters had hoped.²¹²

Education

The first school in the Flathead was established in the fall of 1884, a few miles south of what would become Kalispell.²¹³ The first permanent school building in Kalispell was Central School, constructed in 1894. The high school was located in various temporary buildings until its own building was constructed on the west side in 1903, with several subsequent large additions and remodelings. Other pre-World War II school buildings include Hedges School on the east side, the West Side School (destroyed by fire), Linderman School on the east side, Russell School in the west north area, and Edgerton School (demolished) in the east north area.

²⁰⁸Pine, Vanderlyn R., *Caretaker of the Dead: The American Funeral Director* (New York, NY: Irvington Publishers, Inc., 1975), pp. 17-18; Habenstein, Robert W. and William M. Lamers, *The History of American Funeral Directing* (Milwaukee, WI: Bulfin Printers, 1955), pp. 393-404, 435-439.

²⁰⁹Howe, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

²¹⁰Kalispell City Directory, 1901-02.

²¹¹Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 88; *Inter Lake*, December 2, 1898.

²¹²*Kalispell Bee*, January 19, 1901, p. 3; Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-90.

²¹³McCarthy, Eugene, "The First Public School In Flathead Valley," in Kalispell Water Department, "14th Annual Water Department Report" (1927), p. 60.

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Kalispell also had a business college, founded in 1901 and located in various places on Main Street. This school employed a number of teachers and taught a variety of business skills. The school offered classes in stenography, bookkeeping, salesmanship, and telegraphy, among other subjects. In 1915 the college merged its courses with those offered at the high school, and the college building was then remodeled to be used as a dormitory for out-of-town high school students who previously had been "thrown into Kalispell without supervision of any sort."²¹⁴

In 1917 the Sisters of Mercy Academy and Day School opened its doors to its first students, grades one through nine. Soon the school was teaching high school students as well, and it continued to do so until 1941. Currently the school teaches students through the sixth grade.

One of the chronic problems facing Kalispell educators was the lack of housing for out-of-town high school students. Many students boarded in town during the school year. For a few years the high school operated its own girls' and boys' dormitories on the west side. Single female teachers also typically boarded with families or in basement apartments, many on the west side near the high school.

The Carnegie Library played a significant role in the educational development of the community. The library was built in 1903 for \$10,000 donated by New York philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, with the City of Kalispell guaranteeing \$1,000 a year for the upkeep of the library.

The first attempt at a circulating library in Kalispell had been organized by members of the Century Club, a women's organization. The first Kalispell Library was organized in 1897 and contained 300 volumes, and only those with membership tickets were allowed to borrow books. By a vote of Kalispell citizens, the library became a free public library in 1900, and the city levied taxes for its support. In August of 1900 the public library had 772 circulating volumes, plus 269 volumes for reference. At that time there were 261 contributing members who paid \$1.00 each per year.²¹⁵

By 1921, the Carnegie Library housed approximately 10,000 books and about 200 books were being checked out daily. The library worked closely with the schools, and it had several innovative programs, such as the distribution of books and old magazines to logging camps.²¹⁶ The city library remained in the Carnegie Library building until 1969, when it was consolidated with the Flathead County Library and moved across the street to the Federal Building owned by School District 5. Today the Carnegie Library building houses the Hockaday Center for the Arts.

Clubs and Fraternal Orders

Kalispell residents interested in civic improvement, charity and structured social gatherings joined service clubs, veterans' organizations and fraternal organizations. Several of these groups had women's auxiliaries, and some of the lodges had junior chapters.

At the end of 1892, the *Kalispell Graphic* listed the following organizations in Kalispell: Kalispell Commercial Club, Blaine Republican Club of Kalispell, A. O. U. W., Knights of Pythias, Masonic Lodge, Caledonian Club, and the General Lyons

²¹⁴"Kalispell Business College Merges With High School," *Kalispell Bee*, April 23, 1915, p. 1; Elwood, *Train, op. cit.*, p. 38.

²¹⁵*Flathead Monitor*, August 31, 1900; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, February 3, 1898; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, March 19, 1896; "Facts About the Kalispell Century Club," *Kalispell News*, November 3, 1940, p. 4; *Kalispell Graphic*, November 16, 1892, p. 2; *Kalispell Bee*, August 7, 1900, p. 3.

²¹⁶"Carnegie Public Library," in "8th Annual Water Department Report," (1921), p. 41; *Kalispell Bee*, December 19, 1916, p. 8.

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Post (GAR).²¹⁷ By 1909 the list had greatly expanded, including some groups which reflected the ethnic origins and the occupations of Flathead Valley residents: Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Brotherhood of American Yeomen, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Fraternal Order of Mountaineers, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Independent Order of Foresters, Knights of the Maccabees, Knights of Pythias, Masons, Eastern Star, Modern Woodmen of America, Royal Highlanders, Royal Neighbors of America, Scandinavian Brotherhood of America, Sons of Herman, Woodmen of the World, United Spanish War Veterans and Women of Woodcraft. Other organizations mentioned in early newspapers include a Mozart Club, Chautauqua Circle and a Horticultural Club. Not uncommonly, one individual would belong to several of these organizations. In 1921, there were 22 secret and benevolent lodges having membership at the county seat of Kalispell. Service clubs included the Kiwanis (founded in 1922), the Rotary and the Lions. By the end of the 1920s, Kalispell boasted of 34 fraternities and sister organizations having lodges in town.²¹⁸

At first, Kalispell's various organizations would share meeting space in lodge halls in town, such as the Knights of Pythias hall moved up from Demersville or the upstairs of the McIntosh Opera House. As membership and funding increased, some of the larger groups built their own meeting halls, many of which stand today. These include the Masonic temple, the Odd Fellows hall, the VFW, the Elks temple (purchased from the YMCA, demolished in 1991), the Eagles lodge and the American Legion hall. By the late 1920s, a number of these organizations had summer camps on the shores of Flathead Lake.²¹⁹

Some of the women in Kalispell participated in clubs for literary pursuits, general self-improvement, and also to reform their society. Generally, they focused on women's traditional areas of concern: civic improvement, education and the welfare of children. One of these women's clubs was the Musical Club (study of vocal and instrumental music), organized in 1910. This was followed by the Tuesday Study Club (social and intellectual advancement). The Century Club (originally called the Ladies Tourists Club) had been established in 1893 for literary and travel study. This club was involved in civic improvement projects such as the Carnegie Library, city parks and playgrounds, and so on. These Kalispell women's clubs joined the State Federation of Women's Clubs.²²⁰ Benevolent societies such as the Mothers' Club provided aid to those in need. Kalispell's women also rose to the occasion in times of special need, such as the 1918 flu epidemic. In 1933 the Kalispell branch of the American Association of University Women was organized, and it became involved in community and other projects.

By the turn of the century, these women's organizations began to share members with reform movements such as the temperance and suffrage campaigns. The Kalispell branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized in 1896 and operated a free reading room on Main Street.²²¹ Members of the group tried to convince the City Council to abolish the red light district on 1st Avenue West. The council rejected the idea because then the district would be scattered and more difficult to monitor. This response "thoroughly aroused" the WCTU members, who vowed to work harder to

²¹⁷Kalispell Graphic, December 28, 1892, p. 2.

²¹⁸Kalispell Chamber of Commerce "Kalispell and the Flathead Valley," (1909), p. 45; *Kalispell Bee*, January 19, 1901, p. 3; Stout, *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 727; Kalispell Chamber, "The Flathead A Paradise," (ca. 1928), p. 29.

²¹⁹Kalispell Chamber, "The Flathead A Paradise" (ca. 1928), p. 13.

²²⁰Kalispell Water Department, "10th Annual Water Department Report" (1923), p. 33; "Facts About the Kalispell Century Club," *Kalispell News*, November 3, 1940, p. 4.

²²¹*The Call*, October 1, 1896.

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make Kalispell "a purer and better city."²²² In 1916, under Mayor Pauline, the Kalispell police closed down the red light district, and reportedly all of the 26 sporting ladies who had conducted houses of prostitution on 1st Avenue West left town. Two years later, however, police raided prostitutes in a number of rooming houses.²²³

City of Kalispell Ordinance No. 102 (date unknown) reads as follows:

No prostitute, courtesan or lewd woman should by word, sign or action ply her vocation, upon the streets, or at any place, or shall make any meretricious display of herself upon the street or in any public place.

Organizations for children included the Boy Scouts, which began about 1915 in Kalispell with one troop. Baseball teams were very popular entertainment, as was the Kalispell City Band. According to one of the leaders, the Boy Scouts "believe in having a clean mind in a clean body and are helping to make Kalispell the best place in the world to live in."²²⁴

Parks and Recreation

Woodland Park on the eastern edge of Kalispell has played a very important role in the development of Kalispell as a year-round recreational area convenient to Kalispell residents since the 1910s. Donated to the city in 1903, its appearance today, with lagoons, islands, a swimming pool, and rustic gazebos, is much the same as it looked in 1937 after the completion of a major Works Progress Administration project to convert a "mosquito bog" into a "beauty center."

Kalispell's other parks also helped promote community cohesion and outdoor recreation. These included Lawrence Park on the north end of the city, the Griffin Park baseball field, Depot Park near the railroad depot, and various playgrounds for children.

Many people chose to settle in the Flathead Valley, including Kalispell, because of the outstanding outdoor sports opportunities in the surrounding mountains and lakes. A large number of early settlers in Kalispell considered hunting and fishing their favorite pastimes, and they enjoyed the area accordingly. Kalispell boosters, such as the Chamber of Commerce, ceaselessly promoted Kalispell's easy access to Glacier National Park and other attractions. This was an attraction early on, not just to visitors but to residents as well.

MOVEMENT OF BUILDINGS, 1891-1942

The movement of buildings to, from and within Kalispell was a common occurrence from the town's very beginning, forming a rather unusual aspect of Kalispell's history. The trend began with the wholesale movement of buildings from Demersville to the Kalispell townsite about three miles north in 1891. Perhaps because Kalispell contractors were experienced house movers, already possessing the necessary tools and skills, buildings continued to be moved with unusual frequency over the following decades.

The physical demise of Demersville came about because of the voluntary removal of structures to Kalispell combined with accidental fires and premeditated arson. One large blaze in December of 1891 destroyed 12 buildings near the Demersville

²²²Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.

²²³*Ibid*, p. 67; *Montana Magazine of Western History*, (spring 1983), p. 53.

²²⁴Lamb, J. Arthur, "Boy Scouts of America, Kalispell, Montana," in Kalispell Water Department, "9th Annual Water Department Report" (1922), p. 41.

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docks.²²⁵ A fire in the summer destroyed nearly an entire block, and in the fall another half block burned. In approximately 1950 the platting of Demersville was officially vacated.²²⁶

W. C. Whipps noted that in the winter of 1891, just before the railroad arrived, "One could look out any day and see a flock of houses wending their way to Kalispell."²²⁷ Matt Eccles, an early Flathead settler, recalled watching four to five buildings moving at a time on the cross-country run to Kalispell. A reporter for the *Flathead Journal* reported that 12 buildings were seen on their way to Kalispell at one time.²²⁸

By December of 1892, reported the *Kalispell Graphic*, about half the buildings in Demersville had been removed to Kalispell, either in one piece or torn down and the materials re-used. By the end of 1892, there was no longer a single business house in the earlier town.²²⁹

According to G. M. Houtz, Demersville newsman, "The movement of buildings from Demersville to Kalispell continued diligently all through the winter of 1891 and 1892, the next spring and part of the summer, when all were gone except Cliff House, the M.M. Store and the mayor and his residence on the river bank. The M.M. Company moved its business to Kalispell a year later, the Cliff House burned and the few remaining buildings were dismantled within a year or two."²³⁰ About 15 years later, the Flathead River had made a new channel a half mile east. The grading of Demersville's Main Street is now part of a county road. Demersville is a ghost town with only one building remaining, a school built in 1908.

Moving buildings across the fenceless flats to Kalispell took a day or two. Buildings were jacked up, put on skids and pulled forward on smooth log rollers by horse power.²³¹ One young witness described in her memoirs the moving of the Valley House (a hotel) from Demersville to 2nd Avenue West in Kalispell:

It was fun for children to watch the slow process. They had a number of peeled poles and six horses and a number of men. They would lay a number of poles and with ropes around the building to drag it along the poles, they [would] bring it forward and pull it a few feet farther.²³²

A more detailed description of the moving of a house is provided by Judge Dean King:

[The house] was on sills which rested on rollers--sections of trees, two or three feet in diameter and two or three feet long. These, in turn, rested on very heavy planks. Other planks were laid ahead and the house rolled onto them by

²²⁵"More Than 50 Years of Progress," *Kalispell News*, February 10, 1949, Historical Section, p. 1.

²²⁶Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 8; Rognlien, D. Gordon, "Continuation of Early History," (1964), p. 5, available in "Unpublished Manuscripts: 'Histories of Kalispell, Montana'" at Montana State University Archives, Bozeman, MT.

²²⁷Whipps, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

²²⁸Eccles, Matt, "My Sixty-Six Years in the Flathead From 1866," in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 116; *Flathead Journal* 1891 or 1892, quoted in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 222.

²²⁹"Progressive Kalispell," *Kalispell Graphic*, p. 1; Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 248.

²³⁰Elwood, *Train*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²³¹Jimmy Metler's house was moved this way (Fisher Oral History, 1974, available at Montana Historical Society).

²³²Rogers, Mildred, quoted in Elwood, Henry, "My Childhood in Northern Montana," *Kalispell News*, May 28, 1986.

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horse power. Planks and rollers, left behind, were picked up, and placed ahead to be used again. To the front end of the house was fastened a long cable. The other end of the cable was attached to an upright post, revolving in its socket. This was revolved by means of a long timber fastened to it at one end, and the other end pulled around and around by horses, thus winding up the cable and pulling the house ahead.²³³

Another eyewitness commented that in December of 1891 he would see five or six houses a day moving north on top of wagons, looking "like a huge turtle crossing the prairie between here and Demersville."²³⁴

The moving of buildings was attended by many spectators, often eager to suggest better methods. When contractor B. B. Gilliland moved the wooden Eagle Shoe Store building in 1899 to 2nd Street with considerable difficulty, a reporter commented "It ought to have been easy, for some two hundred or more people offered free advice as to the best method of doing the moving."²³⁵

Some of the buildings moved from Demersville were used for many years until replaced by brick structures. For example, a two-story business/lodge hall building was moved to the corner of 1st Avenue East and 1st Street and served as the county courthouse until the existing courthouse was built in 1903.²³⁶

In 1926, buildings were still being moved by horses, as shown in the following description of the Kirkpatrick brothers moving a plumbing shop one block to the east: "The building was jacked up and placed on log rollers. Heavy cables were attached to the end of the structure and a 20-foot capstan on which two horses were used, was employed to pull the building along the street. The work was started Monday morning and the building was on its new foundation Wednesday morning."²³⁷

According to author Frank B. Linderman, Demersville residents were simply amazed that the railroad would not come to their town, especially since it was on the head of navigation and Kalispell was not even on the river. Once its fate was accepted, however, "Demersville began to move. Hotels, stores, and residences were promptly hauled to Kalispell. I well remember seeing Demersville's second largest hostelry drawn by a score or more of horses on its way to Kalispell, with its regular boarders eating their dinners in its unsteady dining room."²³⁸ A newspaper reporter described what may have been the same event, the moving of a two-story boarding house with many windows passing by on rollers "while the boarders missed never a meal, nor the roomers their rooms."²³⁹

Undoubtedly some property owners moved their buildings, particularly small ones, themselves, using their own horses and the help of friends. Several Kalispell residents, however, advertised themselves as house movers. One of these was D. Woodbury. Another was W. H. Ruther, referred to in 1899 as "the expert house mover"; he had moved out of Kalispell by

²³³King, Judge Dean, "I Remember Kalispell," *Kalispell News*, available in Montana Historical Society files.

²³⁴*Daily Inter Lake*, December 24, 1925, p. 3.

²³⁵*Inter Lake*, June 30, 1899; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, June 29, 1899.

²³⁶Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

²³⁷*Flathead Monitor*, April 22, 1926, p. 5.

²³⁸Linderman, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

²³⁹*Flathead Journal*, article of 1891 or 1892 quoted in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 222.

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1901. Another contracting firm that advertised itself as house movers was the Kirkpatrick family, headed by father Perry H. Kirkpatrick. He moved to Kalispell in 1906 with his family; several of the sons worked with him and then continued the business after he died in 1930. In the 1910 census one of the Kirkpatricks described his occupation specifically as a house mover. The company also did excavation work and general contracting and was in business for several decades (one of their lasting monuments is the obelisk still at the summit of Marias Pass, recently moved to the south side of the highway). In the 1915 City Directory, Perry Kirkpatrick no longer listed himself as a contractor: now he too was a "housemover."²⁴⁰

A great number of buildings were moved from Demersville, everything from residences to fruit stands to the Missoula Mercantile Company warehouse to a wholesale liquor store to the Knights of Pythias Hall. At least one building, a hotel, was moved from Ashley to Kalispell to take advantage of the new center of business. In July of 1891, during the slow period in Kalispell before the railroad arrived, at least one building was moved in the reverse direction, from Kalispell to Demersville. A reporter said 14 draft horses pulled the Great Northern saloon, which sat on four large log wagons. The owner of the building apparently could not find renters in Kalispell.²⁴¹

Once most of the buildings in Demersville had been moved up to Kalispell, the movement of buildings to, from and within Kalispell did not end. Many of the original wood frame buildings in the business district were moved off to other sites to make room for replacement brick buildings. Rarely were buildings torn down for materials; this may be because none were very old, so they could be serviceable intact in a different location. There are many documented cases of this type of movement of business blocks between the years 1898 and 1926. One typical example is a 1909 newspaper article mentioning that the old McKnight saloon building was being moved to make way for the McKnight brick block (soon to be known as the Montana Hotel facing 2nd Street East). The old wood frame building was sold to F. B. Mingle, who moved it to 1st Avenue West to use as a mercantile.²⁴²

Kalispell's house movers were also kept busy moving private residential buildings. People bought houses for a good price and then had them moved to lots they owned. Conversely, they would buy a cheap lot and have their own house moved onto it. Investors and real estate agents would move houses to empty lots hoping to rent them out. And, as today, houses were moved when developers needed the land for a project. One family built a house in town and then later tore it down and rebuilt it on their ranch property. Another family originally planned to raze their old house and build a larger residence on the same corner lot. Instead, they moved the old house one lot to the south (now at 519 3rd Avenue East) and rented it out for many years, and lived in their new home where the smaller one had been. In addition, houses were sometimes raised in order to have a basement and concrete foundation put under them (this was done to the Methodist manse, for example, in 1911).²⁴³

Kalispell also was the scene of some rather unusual and challenging moving projects. The Kalispell Lumber Company office was jacked up and skidded from the East North section of town in 1927 to the company's new sawmill site on the

²⁴⁰*Flathead Herald-Journal*, August 31, 1899; Woodbury is listed in the 1901-02 Kalispell City Directory as a teamster, but by the 1904-17 Directories his listing reads "House Mover, Contracting, excavating and General Team Work. 1910 Census; "P. H. Kirkpatrick Passes On," *Kalispell Times*, October 9, 1930; *Kalispell Times*, June 18, 1931; Kalispell City Directories, 1907-1941.

²⁴¹*Inter Lake*, May 13, 1892, quoted in Johns, *op. cit.*, vol. 7, p. 72; *Flathead Journal*, 1891, quoted in Johns, vol. 9, pp. 4, 10; *Flathead Herald-Journal*, January 23, 1896; *Inter Lake*, July 10, 1895, p. 5.

²⁴²*Inter Lake*, June 17, 1898; *Kalispell Bee*, October 7, 1909, p. 5; *Flathead Monitor*, April 22, 1926, p. 5.

²⁴³*Flathead Herald-Journal*, August 10, 1899, December 21, 1899, and January 4, 1900; *Kalispell Bee*, December 11, 1900, p. 3 and December 21, 1906, p. 8; "New Buildings Erected in Kalispell During The Past Year," *Kalispell Journal*, December 7, 1907, p. 1; *Kalispell Times*, December 6, 1945; Eccles, Matt, in Elwood, *Kalispell*, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

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west end of town. Similarly, the Kalispell Industrial Company's warehouse was moved from its original site on the Stillwater River to the railroad right-of-way to serve as flour storage for the Farmers' Co-operative Association. William Kirkpatrick moved the old Great Northern section house and the "Japanese house" from the south to the north side of the tracks in the Great Northern yard. When the Main Street crossing over the railroad tracks was opened in 1907 buildings including the railroad ice house, had to be moved. In 1913 the "big flour mill" of Bjorneby Brothers was moved about three blocks to a new location. Originally the mill owners had planned to load the mill building onto a railroad flatbed car, but Perry Kirkpatrick, fearing it might overturn, moved the 260-ton building with machinery intact "in the ordinary manner" with two winches that could develop 280 horsepower.²⁴⁴

Perhaps the most unusual "move," however, was the conversion of the Charles E. Conrad carriage house and stables on the east side of Woodland Drive into five different houses in Kalispell. A. J. Dean, president of the Chamber of Commerce, bought the carriage house and stables and hired architect Fred Brinkman to design the conversion. It is not known who moved the pieces of the original structure to their new sites.²⁴⁵

After the Hungry Horse Dam was completed in 1952, quite a few houses were moved from Hungry Horse to Kalispell by dam workers who decided to stay in the Flathead. In the past several decades, over 100 buildings have been moved within, out of, and in to Kalispell.

CONCLUSION

The railroad town of Kalispell, Montana, did not disappear when the Great Northern Railway moved its division point to Whitefish in 1904. Its continued growth and prosperity was due partly to the increasingly important role of agriculture, which helped to diversify the economy of the town from its earlier dependence on logging, and to the efforts of Kalispell residents to promote their town.

In 1935 a *Missoulian* writer commented that "it often has been remarked by visitors that they seldom had found a city whose people as a whole were so intensely loyal and so earnest in their efforts to make their town better." He believed this community spirit was reflected in the parks, playgrounds, school buildings and the fire department, but it also was reflected in the prosperity of the town even under adverse circumstances.²⁴⁶

Some of the residents of Kalispell in the 1890s had high hopes for the young town, based on its role as a division point on the main line of the railroad. An early Kalispell mayor and real estate agent commented to a friend in 1912 that "Kalispell never did become the town we thought it would be when we settled here."²⁴⁷ Yet the town drew on its varied resources and its identity as the regional trade center for northwestern Montana and grew slowly and prospered. Perhaps the early boosters' slogan "All roads lead to Kalispell," penned in 1895, was more true than they had realized.

²⁴⁴"Kalispell Lumber Co. Moves General Office to New Mill," *Flathead Monitor*, August 11, 1927, p. 1; *Kalispell Journal*, February 3, 1910; "Railroad Men Inspect Kalispell Division This Week," *Kalispell Bee*, September 29, 1911, p. 1; "To Move Flour Mill," *Kalispell Bee*, August 8, 1913, p. 3; "Flour Mill Being Moved," *Kalispell Bee*, September 5, 1913, p. 1; Elwood, *Kalispell, op. cit.*, p. 262.

²⁴⁵"3rd Time's the Charm for Conrad's Carriage House," *Daily Inter Lake*, September 18, 1980.

²⁴⁶Buc, O.J., *op. cit.*

²⁴⁷Elwood, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

RESIDENCES AND ASSOCIATED OUTBUILDINGS

Description

Subtype: Craftsman-style Residences

The Craftsman style of architecture, often merged with elements of the Colonial Revival style, was very popular in Kalispell for residences from approximately 1907 until 1928. Typical features include wide eaves, decorative knee braces, exposed rafter tails, full-width front porches with battered columns resting on piers, and projecting windows. Colonial Revival-style elements include the simple, rectangular plans and symmetrical gable-front or side-gable roofs with wide hipped porch roofs supported by Doric or squared columns.

Subtype: All Other Residences

Kalispell residences were typically built of wood (brick residences are relatively uncommon), and single-family detached housing is the rule, with multifamily buildings the exception. During the first two decades of Kalispell's existence, from 1891 until approximately 1910, only a few styles of residences dominated the town. These included Queen Anne-style residences (both large and elaborate and more modest, folk Victorian buildings), front-gable-and-wing residences, and one-story four-square residences with full-width front porches. Many examples of these types of residences from this period still exist. All originally had native rock or timber foundations; many have now been converted to concrete. A prominent feature of almost all early Kalispell residences was the front porch (and sometimes rear porches as well). Many of these porches have since been enclosed, generally since World War II. Many of these early residences had decorative windows, such as stained glass or leaded glass panes. Most of these windows have been retained, but many other original windows have been replaced. Much of the decorative scrollwork and shinglework on the Queen Anne-style residences in particular have since been removed or covered over with modern siding. All of the roofs of Kalispell's early residences would originally have been covered with wood shingles; most of these have been replaced with composition shingles, some with metal.

A few of Kalispell's houses dating from the 1890s are Shingle-style residences, but these are so unusual (one is the Conrad Mansion) that they should be considered atypical rather than representative of the era.

From approximately 1910 until World War II, the end of the historic period of significance as defined by National Register requirements, Kalispell residents constructed buildings in a great variety of styles, and the local architects were correspondingly versatile in their designs. Thus, one can find high-style examples of the following architectural styles in Kalispell, plus numerous vernacular expressions: Colonial Revival, American Foursquare, Mission, Prairie, Tudor, English Cottage, Classical Revival, French Renaissance, and Romanesque, plus eclectic combinations of the above.

Large houses typically were constructed on several lots, often containing a corner lot. In later years the owners often sold off some of the adjacent lots and infilling occurred. This explains the existence of buildings from the 1930s, for example, next to 1890s dwellings.

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Subtype: Outbuildings

Very few outbuildings in Kalispell date from the 1890s. Most of the pre-World War I outbuildings have been demolished or greatly remodeled. Even so, there are a number of noteworthy early carriage houses scattered throughout town. Most dwellings would have had other associated outbuildings besides a barn and/or garage, such as an outhouse, a henhouse, and a woodshed. Virtually all of these smaller, specialized buildings no longer exist. The typical pre-World War II garage in Kalispell has a gabled roof, clapboard siding, exposed rafter tails, and double doors that open out or slide on a track.

Significance

Kalispell's residential neighborhoods are the heart of the city and comprise the bulk of the historic districts. These neighborhoods are not architecturally uniform; rather, each block typically contains a variety of styles constructed in a number of different decades. The districts have unusually high concentrations of historic buildings, probably because Kalispell experienced a series of building booms through 1942 with a resulting shortage of building lots in the central parts of town.

The associated historic contexts are Community Planning and Development, 1892-1942, and Ethnic Heritage, 1891-1942, and this property type meets the registration requirements under Criteria A for historical associations and C for architectural associations. A number of residences are also eligible under B for association with significant persons.

Registration Requirements

Subtype: Craftsman-style Residences

Since there are many classic examples of Craftsman-style residences in Kalispell, properties should meet rather strict physical integrity standards in order to meet the registration requirements. Thus, Craftsman-style residences with enclosed porches or modern windows would not be eligible, nor would those that have lost the original siding unless other features are sufficiently distinctive to evoke the style and period of construction. Porches that were glazed during the historic period and still read as porches, however, would not disqualify a property from meeting the registration requirements.

Subtype: All Other Residences

Kalispell residences that were not designed by architects and are not Craftsman-style buildings have a great variety of appearances and levels of physical integrity. To generalize, a property meets the registration requirements if it possesses sufficient integrity to evoke the period of construction and its style, if appropriate. Significant changes to the exterior, such as new windows, an enclosed porch, or new siding, would not by themselves warrant disqualification, but combinations of more than one such change should be carefully evaluated for the overall impact on the property's ability to evoke the historic period.

A unique resource that lies outside of the boundaries of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey but partially within the city limits of Kalispell is the area of town that was once the town of Ashley. Established in the 1880s, Ashley was a small settlement along Ashley Creek (its main street was what is now Meridian Road, and it was in the vicinity of 6th to 8th Streets West). It was later absorbed by the growing town of Kalispell, but the original street names shown on the Ashley plat and the east-west orientation of the alleys (versus the north-south orientation of the rest of town) reflect its origins as a separate, earlier town. Although the area is now primarily characterized by modern tract homes, there are a few buildings that are oriented differently and appear to date from the 1880s or 1890s. If any of these are verified to be Ashley residences or outbuildings, they should meet the registration requirements because they are the only remaining

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physical evidence of the town that was Kalispell's predecessor. They should only be considered ineligible if their exterior appearance has been so drastically changed that they no longer evoke the period of Ashley's significance as one of the first communities in the Flathead Valley.

Subtype: Outbuildings

All outbuildings that meet the registration requirements must be associated with a dwelling. An outbuilding that no longer has an associated residence does not possess sufficient integrity of setting and association to be eligible for listing on the National Register. The only possible exception would be a case where a specialized outbuilding was identified that is a unique example of its type in the area and thus could be valuable for research. An example would be the identification of a pre-1910 chicken coop or dairy barn; neither is known to exist within the city limits at this point, although there once were many such structures in town.

ARCHITECT-DESIGNED RESOURCES

Description

Subtype: Commercial and Public Resources

Quite a few of Kalispell's business blocks and public buildings were designed by local architects. Many others were designed by local contractors without the aid of architects. Architect-designed buildings typically conform more closely to a particular architectural style, sometimes with unusual details such as the cupola on the Carnegie Library, which is otherwise a representative Colonial Revival-style building. All of the known architect-designed commercial and public buildings are of brick rather than wood frame construction.

Subtype: Residential Resources

Kalispell's residences designed by architects vary greatly in size, style and materials. In addition to houses designed by architects, architect-designed additions and remodelings have also been identified, and some of these fit into this property type (particularly notable are the ones that changed the architectural style of a building, for example from Queen Anne to Tudor). Some architects appear to have favored one style, such as Joseph Gibson and the Craftsman style, but others designed buildings in the full range of styles popular at that time. Fred Brinkman favored certain detailing, such as quatre-foils and mock half timbering. It is not possible, however, to identify the work of a particular architect by examining its design, layout, use of materials, detailing, etc.

Significance

From the day of its platting, Kalispell has always had one or more professional architects in residence. Although these architects did not design the majority of Kalispell's buildings, their influence on the physical appearance of Kalispell is strongly felt, especially in the commercial district. Local architects designed many of Kalispell's business blocks, churches, schools, and government buildings, as well as residences ranging from the very modest to the large and ostentatious. Two architects had a particularly strong influence during the historic period: Marion Rizzo and Fred Brinkman. They and others are discussed in the historic context. A few buildings were designed by non-local architects and also fall within this property type. These include the Federal Building and the Flathead County Courthouse and Jail. In addition, many of Kalispell's buildings have been remodeled under the direction of an architect; these architect-designed alterations add to the significance of the buildings.

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Properties designed by architects in Kalispell meet the registration requirements under Criterion C for architectural associations. The associated historic context is Architect-designed Buildings, 1891-1942.

Registration Requirements

An architect-designed building meets the registration requirements if it possesses very good physical integrity and if it can be documented to be the work of a particular person. If a major change has occurred, such as new siding that changes the appearance greatly, the building should not be listed under this property type. Most such buildings, however, have been well cared for over the years and possess excellent integrity. Some of Kalispell's largest residences, in particular, possess remarkable integrity on both the interiors and exteriors.

RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH COMMERCE

Description

Subtype: Wood frame

Kalispell's "first generation" of business buildings were typically one-story wood frame front-gabled buildings, often with false fronts. Only a few of these buildings still exist, and almost all have been significantly remodeled. Because of later fire codes, buildings constructed in the commercial district after the initial period of construction were of necessity built of brick or other fireproof material.

Subtype: Brick and other

Most of Kalispell's surviving business blocks that date from the pre-World War II era are constructed of brick. These one-, two- or three-story buildings typically have some ornamentation, such as corbelling or terra cotta decorations, but nothing too elaborate. Some of the earlier buildings have native rock pilasters, sills and lintels. Most (but not all) have full basements of either native rock or concrete (depending on when the basement was constructed). The business blocks typically had cloth awnings over the first and often the second-floor windows. Other features typical of western vernacular storefront design include an apron, commercial glazing and leaded glass transom spanning the facade, recessed entries, regularly placed fenestration on the second story, and facades extending to the lot line.

Significance

Kalispell owes its prosperity today to its development during the historic period as the regional trade center for northwestern Montana. Kalispell's businessmen played an active role in promoting the community, both to prospective residents and to tourists. The town was strategically located on the main line of the Great Northern Railway for its first 12 years, then on a spur line for almost 40 more years. This connection with the national marketing network enabled Kalispell's businessmen to take advantage of larger markets than the Flathead Valley could provide, and the community benefitted accordingly. Commerce and the development of Kalispell are intricately linked. The associated historic contexts are Development of Commerce and Industry, 1891-1942, and Ethnic Heritage, 1891-1942 (reflecting the contributions of the Chinese, primarily, to commerce in Kalispell). Resources of this property type would be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their historical associations.

Registration Requirements

Subtype: Wood frame

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Very few of Kalispell's numerous wood frame business buildings with false fronts survive today (the best example is Boyd's Shop at 227 1st Street West). Therefore, most that are identified should meet the registration requirements, provided they have sufficient physical integrity to evoke the period. The false front should be constructed of the original materials, and at least 50% of the front facade of the building should retain its original appearance. Buildings constructed after the 1920s with false fronts to recapture the "frontier" feeling do not meet the registration requirements under this property type.

Wood frame business buildings without false fronts should be evaluated carefully. Most of these buildings in Kalispell no longer retain enough of their original appearance to evoke the period, as the storefronts and often the upper stories have been remodeled. A storefront entrance that can be shown to have its original appearance would add greatly to the building's integrity, although at least 50% of the front facade would still need to retain its original appearance for the building to meet the registration requirements.

Subtype: Brick and Other

Most of Kalispell's pre-World War II business blocks are brick or concrete block. In order to meet the registration requirements these buildings should retain enough physical integrity to evoke the historic period. Original windows, leaded glass full-width transom lights, tilework and pressed metal ceilings in the entranceways, and advertising signs from the historic period all help convey the historic feeling. The modern storefronts that respect the historic tripart design pattern detract less from the overall historic architectural integrity of the building than those that are infilled with modern materials, but typically neither has any exposed historic material.

RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH INDUSTRY

Description

When Kalispell was still a railroad town, its industrial center was strung out along both sides of the railroad tracks. Many of Kalispell's industrial buildings and structures no longer exist, the victims of fire, development, and changing economies. Where once there were a number of grain mills, today there are only two sets of historic grain elevators, the Kalispell Flour Mill and the Equity Supply Company Elevator and Creamery (for more information on these, see the individual registration forms). Almost all of the warehouses that once lined the railroad tracks are now gone. The Kalispell Malting & Brewing Company complex on 5th Avenue West has been largely demolished; the two remaining buildings have large modern additions and significant exterior remodelings, so that this property is not considered eligible for listing on the National Register. Of the town's early lumber-related buildings, only one remains: the Kalispell Lumber Company Retail Building, constructed in the 1930s. This is considered eligible for listing although the other buildings that were part of the complex during the historic period no longer exist. One important laundry building still exists, the Kalispell-American Laundry, and this too is considered eligible for listing. Another industrial complex is that of the Continental Oil Company on 1st Avenue West, which includes both the company's garage and the warehouse for their bulk fuels and other supplies and it is eligible for listing.

Common attributes of these industrial properties include (for most) location along the main line or spur line of the railroad, brick rather than wood frame construction, and generally large, open interior spaces. Some have large-span roofing systems, and many combine processing, storage, and retail operations in one complex. Some feature unusual structures in Kalispell, such as the 1909 cast concrete silos at the Kalispell Flour Mill. Most of Kalispell's industrial properties are devoid of ornamentation; they are solid, functional buildings designed for a specific purpose, later modified for other uses.

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Significance

Within its first decade, Kalispell "capitalists" had established several important industries, including a flour mill, a brewery, sawmills and planing mills, and a brick plant. As the city grew in importance in the region, even after the main line of the railroad moved north, Kalispell continued to attract industrialists and their investments. These industries played a vital role in the economic life of the community, linking it with the surrounding Flathead Valley and beyond. Some of the larger industries distributed their products by the Great Northern Railway and other lines to the west coast and to other parts of the country, even overseas. The resources that still exist from the historic period reflect Kalispell's important role as the regional trade center, not just in commerce but in manufacturing. Resources in this property type are eligible under Criterion A for their historical associations, and some may be eligible under Criterion C for their architecture or engineering. Associated historic contexts are Lumber Industry, 1891-1942, and Development of Commerce and Industry, 1891-1942.

Registration Requirements

Properties that are associated with industry should retain enough physical integrity to evoke the historic period and the purpose of the buildings. The loss of buildings within a complex is acceptable if other buildings that still exist can evoke the original use on their own. Ideally, the complex should maintain its original setting, although this is rare because of development pressures. If a property retains little physical integrity on the exterior but still has original machinery on the interior that could further the understanding of manufacturing processes, that property should meet the registration requirements. It is not required, however, that industrial properties retain sufficient original structures and equipment so that the historic processing can still be understood.

RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Description

Subtype: Education-associated Resources

Kalispell's pre-World War II school buildings have all been inventoried as part of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey. These include Central School, Linderman School, Cornelius Hedges School, Russell School, the Flathead County High School, and the St. Matthew's School. All but the latter two are considered eligible for listing on the National Register (see registration forms for more information). Other school buildings, such as the original high school, Westside School and Edgerton School, no longer exist. In general, the existing school buildings reflect the community's pride in its educational system and the sense of the permanence of the community.

The Carnegie Library also falls within this subtype. This building, an unusual Colonial Revival-style building with a domed vestibule, had an extremely important role as the city library for many decades. It is within the East Side Historic District.

Subtype: Health-associated Resources

Kalispell's health-care facilities have been located in various places, including in practitioners' homes. The buildings that have been used as hospitals include the Kalispell Hospital and the Kalispell General Hospital, both within the East Side Historic District, and the Hotel Norden, which is considered eligible for listing on the National Register. It appears that there are no other such resources in the city. The Kalispell General Hospital and the Hotel Norden are both constructed of brick in the commercial style; the Kalispell Hospital is wood frame and was designed in the popular Colonial Revival style.

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Subtype: Resources Associated with Fraternal Groups

The most noteworthy fraternal building in Kalispell dating from the historic period is the Masonic Temple, located within the Main Street Commercial Historic District. The other prominent building of this type was the YMCA/Elks building, which was demolished in 1991. Although various fraternal groups have met in the upper floors of commercial buildings, that has not been their primary use. It appears that there are no other such resources in the city.

Subtype: Resources Associated with Religious Groups

Only two of Kalispell's "first generation" of churches, typified by wood frame construction, Gothic detailing, and steeples, still exist. Both of these are considered eligible for listing on the National Register. The remaining churches have all been built within the past 50 years. These more recent churches were generally constructed in the early 1950s (Fred Brinkman was the architect for several) and are masonry buildings with Gothic or Colonial Revival-style details.

Subtype: Resources Associated with Art, Literature, and Music

This property subtype includes residences of significant artists, writers, and musicians, and buildings associated with such cultural efforts. The most prominent building of this type is the McIntosh Opera House, which served as Kalispell's cultural center for many decades. The building is included within the Main Street Commercial Historic District. The Scherf House at 737 1st Avenue West is associated with Margaret Scherf, nationally known mystery and general fiction writer. Few other buildings in this subtype, however, have been identified. Their identification rests on association with cultural events and leaders, not with identifiable physical appearances.

Significance

Each of the subtypes described above played a significant role in the development of Kalispell, both as a liveable community and as a regional trade center. For a more thorough discussion, see the historic context. The quite diverse range of buildings of this subtype are associated with the historic contexts of Social and Cultural Development, 1891-1942, Community Planning and Development, 1892-1942, and Ethnic Heritage, 1891-1942. They are eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their historical associations. The historic resources associated with culture and community life in Kalispell reflect the patterns of social interaction during the historic period.

Registration Requirements

It is believed that all the pre-World War II buildings associated with education, health, fraternal groups, and religious groups have been identified and evaluated as part of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey. These buildings are considered eligible for listing on the National Register if they possess sufficient physical integrity to evoke their association with the appropriate social or cultural aspect of Kalispell's history and if they would still be recognized by someone from the historic period of their use. The importance of their role in the community is also considered in the evaluation. If other such resources are identified within the city limits, they should be subjected to the same standards.

It is possible that other buildings associated with art, literature and music in Kalispell will be identified. In order to meet the registration requirements, such buildings should be more than 50 years old and should possess sufficient physical integrity to convey their association with the appropriate person or event(s).

Several of Kalispell's prominent masonry Gothic-style churches were constructed in the early 1950s and thus may be evaluated for eligibility to the National Register within the next decade.

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RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH GOVERNMENT

Description

This property type is characterized by prominent, high-style buildings designed to reflect the permanence and importance of the governing bodies housed inside them. Thus the Federal Building and the City Water Department are excellent examples of the Colonial Revival style of architecture, and the Flathead County Courthouse and Jail is Kalispell's only example of the Chateausque style. The courthouse complex is also noteworthy because it is located on an island in the center of Main Street; automobile traffic divides and circles around the buildings.

Other resources associated with government include residences associated with prominent government employees. There are no unifying physical characteristics of these buildings.

Significance

The federal, county and city governments have all had a significant role in Kalispell's development as the regional trade center for the Flathead Valley and beyond, as discussed in the historic context. Many of Kalispell's residents settled in the town because their jobs required them to be in the seat of government for their area. In addition, Kalispell's being the headquarters for the county and federal governments in the area provided a stimulus to commerce, education, transportation, and other areas and thus strengthened its position in the region. This property type may be eligible for listing under Criteria A for its historical associations, B for its association with significant government employees, and C for its architectural associations. The associated historic contexts are Influence of Federal Government, 1891-1942, and Community Planning and Development, 1892-1942.

The primary building associated with the federal government during the historic period is the Federal Building, which is a physical reminder of the great influence of the federal government, particularly the U. S. Forest Service, on the settlement and growth of Kalispell and the surrounding areas. For more information on the Federal Building, see its registration form.

Registration Requirements

The Federal Building is the only known historic resource associated directly with the federal government. In addition, however, some residences in Kalispell are associated with significant federal employees, and others may be identified in the future. In order to meet the registration requirements, a property associated with a significant government employee should be the building most associated with the person and should possess sufficient integrity that he or she would recognize the property. Significant changes to the exterior, such as new windows, an enclosed porch, or new siding, would not by themselves warrant disqualification, but combinations of more than one such change should be carefully evaluated for the overall impact on the property's ability to evoke the historic period and its association with the person.

On the county level, the Flathead County Courthouse and Jail are the buildings most associated with the county. The courthouse complex is the focal point of the proposed Courthouse Historic District. The selection of Kalispell as the county seat in 1894 did much to prevent the town from going under when the railroad division point was moved to Whitefish in 1904. The construction of the courthouse in 1903 reflects the residents' faith in Kalispell as the county seat of a thriving region of Montana. Buildings associated with significant county employees may be identified in the future. In order to meet the registration requirements, such properties should be the building most associated with the person and should possess sufficient integrity that he or she would recognize the property. Significant changes to the exterior, such as new windows, an enclosed porch, or new siding, would not by themselves warrant disqualification, but combinations of

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more than one such change should be carefully evaluated for the overall impact on the property's ability to evoke the historic period and its association with the person.

On the city level, the primary building that still exists is the City Water Department, built in 1928 (the 1903 City Hall has been demolished). This Colonial Revival-style building, which possesses excellent integrity, exemplifies the pride of Kalispell's residents (and city employees) in their town. Other buildings associated with the city would be residences of significant city employees. Several are already included within the proposed historic districts, but others might be identified in the future. The house of one of Kalispell's most important residents, Mayor W. C. Whipps, no longer exists. In order to meet the registration requirements, such properties should be the building most associated with the person and should possess sufficient integrity that he or she would recognize the property. Significant changes to the exterior, such as new windows, an enclosed porch, or new siding, would not by themselves warrant disqualification, but combinations of more than one such change should be carefully evaluated for the overall impact on the property's ability to evoke the historic period and its association with the person.

RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH TRANSPORTATION

Description

Subtype: Railroad-associated Resources

The only Great Northern Railway building that still exists in Kalispell is the depot building (see the registration form). Other railroad buildings that once were prominent features of Kalispell, such as the roundhouse, ice house, and coal chute, no longer exist. Properties with less direct links to the railroad include warehouses, stores and industrial buildings located along the railroad tracks. These types of buildings are typically one- or two-story brick buildings that are aligned parallel to the railroad tracks. In most cases their close relationship with the railroad is obvious, but in at least one case (the Kalispell Monument Works at 7 1st Avenue East) it is no longer apparent that the building once had a spur line running to it.

Subtype: Horse- and Bicycle-associated Resources

Within the boundaries of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey there are no surviving liveries or bicycle repair shops dating from the pre-automobile era. It is possible, however, that one or more may be identified in the outlying areas that have not yet been surveyed. These buildings were primarily located along 1st Avenue East in Kalispell in the 1890s and early 1900s and have since been replaced (sometimes, ironically, with gas stations).

Subtype: Automobile- and Bus-associated Resources

Numerous buildings in Kalispell were originally constructed to serve the motorized transportation needs of the community, both automobile and bus (in the form of the Intermountain Bus Station). The service stations that still exist vary greatly in style, from simple brick structures to an Art Deco-style building to one designed to look like a Tudor-style residence. The automobile dealerships and repair shops also had a variety of styles, but most that still exist date from the 1920s or 1930s and are one-story buildings with brick veneer and little ornamentation. Quite a few of the important service stations and dealerships have been demolished or destroyed by fire.

Significance

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As in other communities, changing methods of transportation greatly affected Kalispell's development. Until the Great Northern Railway pulled into Kalispell for the first time in January of 1892, the town was fairly isolated, and area farmers and manufacturers could only market their goods locally. The impact of the railroad on the Flathead Valley was swift, dramatic, and long-lasting. Although residents continued to rely on horse and wagon - and bicycle - for local transportation and on steamboats and horse and wagon for north-south transportation, the train became the favored method of transportation for both people and freight for many years.

The potentially disastrous removal of Kalispell from the main line of the railroad was eased greatly by the development of automobiles and of improved roads leading to Kalispell. Many of Kalispell's businessmen were involved in the Good Roads Movement, and this effort paid off in the construction of highways that encouraged residents of other towns and of outlying rural areas to travel to Kalispell to shop and do their business. Kalispell promoters were quick to take advantage of the construction of highways that were even rather distant, such as the Roosevelt Highway over Marias Pass that was completed in 1930. That highway, which enabled easier travel to Glacier National Park, allowed Kalispell to promote itself as the "Gateway to Glacier Park." As early boosters liked to put it, "All roads lead to Kalispell."

The growing popularity of automobiles after World War I changed the physical appearance of Kalispell in a number of ways. The town was no longer so completely oriented to the railroad tracks. Main Street was opened up across the tracks, and the condition of Kalispell's streets was improved. Instead of building large barns to house their horses, people constructed much smaller detached garages, and after about 1930 garages were commonly attached to the dwellings.

Properties of this type are associated with the historic context of Transportation, 1891-1942. They meet the registration requirements under Criterion A for their historical associations.

Registration Requirements

Subtype: Railroad-associated Resources

Resources associated with the railroad should possess sufficient integrity to evoke Kalispell's era as a railroad town. If a building was constructed on the main line or spur line, existence of the railroad track adjacent to the building is not critical for it to meet the registration requirements, but it would certainly help clarify the relationship. Much of the railroad line has been removed in Kalispell and the remaining sections are threatened; the track itself is a historic resource but so little of it remains that it is not considered eligible for listing on the National Register.

Subtype: Horse- and Bicycle-associated Resources

Resources associated with horse and wagon and with bicycle travel in Kalispell, if identified, should possess enough physical integrity that they can evoke the period that they were used for those purposes.

Subtype: Automobile- and Bus-associated Resources

Resources associated with the use of automobiles and buses in Kalispell are more numerous than the other categories and therefore should exhibit a stricter standard of physical integrity in order to meet the registration requirements. The exterior appearance should not be significantly altered, although the infilling of garage bays is acceptable. Retention of interior specialized features such as an oil-changing pit or a clearly-defined waiting area is desirable but not required. The buildings should retain enough integrity that a customer from the historic period would still recognize them.

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PARKS AND GARDENS

Description

The largest park in Kalispell is Woodland Park, a large public park on the northeast edge of town that was reclaimed from a swamp. Woodland Park features gazebos, a pavilion, lagoons, an ice skating area, formal rose gardens, and a swimming pool; this 1930s-era park is described on its registration form. Kalispell's other large park is Lawrence Park, which was created by the City Water Department on the north edge of town, where its pumping station was located. It is still in use as a park, and it features rambling rustic paths and wooded areas.

Numerous Kalispell residences have gardens, some of them featuring plants, trees, and layouts dating from the historic period. It is likely that more will be identified in the future. There are several large, professionally landscaped gardens within Kalispell that still exist. The most noteworthy are the large garden behind 632 6th Street East and the landscaping surrounding the Conrad Mansion, both of which are included within the East Side Historic District. During the historic period, the town's residential neighborhoods featured flower gardens and fences (wood, chicken wire, and iron) in the front yards, vegetable gardens and fruit trees in the back yards, and flowers along the alleys. Shade trees planted by the City in Kalispell's early years still line both sides of the streets in the residential neighborhoods.

Significance

Kalispell has been known over the decades for its parks, residential shade trees, and beautiful private gardens. The largest and most significant park in Kalispell is Woodland Park, long popular with both children and adults as a four-season recreational area within walking distance of most homes in Kalispell. Depot Park, south of the Great Northern Railway Depot, was the focus of beautification efforts by the city during the historic period, and its description is included with the nomination for the depot itself. Lawrence Park, on the north edge of town, does not lie within the boundaries of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey, but it would be eligible for listing on the National Register if it meets the Registration Requirements for physical integrity. Other smaller parks in Kalispell, such as the ballfield called Griffin Park, no longer exist or have been greatly changed over the years since the historic period. Each of these parks, however, played an important role in the community life of Kalispell during the historic period, as discussed in the historic context. The parks that still exist today reflect the pride of Kalispell's citizens in the physical appearance of their city and also their concern for the physical welfare of its citizens, particularly the children.

The high visibility and appeal of Kalispell's large, professionally designed gardens should not overshadow the importance of the smaller landscaping projects created by many, many homeowners in Kalispell. The overall effect upon visitors and residents was to create the impression of a town that cared about its appearance and about the quality of life of its residents. Local newspapers described in loving detail the elaborate gardens of Kalispell residents, and although many of these featured gardens have since been converted to lawns (or parking areas), many still offer glimpses of their former glory.

Registration Requirements

For a park in Kalispell to meet the registration requirements, it must retain a significant amount of the landscaping from the historic period, enough to evoke the period and the intended uses of the park. For Lawrence Park to be eligible, the original appearance would need to be researched and then compared to its present appearance. Addition of structures such as maintenance sheds, etc., would not disqualify a park from listing, but a complete re-routing of paths and relocation of waterways, or the substitution of new materials for old (for example, metal rails for rustic cedar rails) would. Parks would be eligible for listing under Criteria C, for landscape architecture, and A for their historical associations. Associated

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historic contexts would be Community Planning and Development, 1892-1942, and Social and Cultural Development, 1891-1942.

Private gardens in Kalispell meet the registration requirements if they retain a majority of the original landscaping design dating from the pre-World War II period. Retention of the original setting (dwellings, open spaces, outbuildings, etc.) is critical, as otherwise the historic feel and appearance of the outdoor site would be lost. Changes in vegetation over the decades are expected and would not necessarily detract from the overall significance of the site.

RESOURCES THAT HAVE BEEN MOVED

Description

This property type includes buildings moved from Demersville to Kalispell (and thus built between 1887 and 1891), moved within Kalispell, and moved from outside of the city limits to Kalispell.

The physical appearance of buildings moved from Demersville remains somewhat of a mystery, as only one that still exists has been identified. This is a modest one-story residence with a hipped roof, typical of other residences built in Kalispell in the 1890s, particularly those for railroad workers. The physical appearance of other Demersville buildings is known only from historic photographs, and those show only the commercial area of town. Most of the business blocks of Demersville were one-story wood frame buildings with false fronts. Only a few buildings were higher, but some of those were moved in to Kalispell when Demersville was known to be a dying town. Demersville structures would presumably have been very similar to structures built in Kalispell in the 1890s, but this is not known for sure.

Buildings moved within and into Kalispell from other areas have no particular characteristics in common. They range from very small residences to large commercial structures such as a planer mill and a tourist court. Some were broken into sections and moved to different locations, such as the Conrad Stable that was converted into five separate residences in different parts of town. Some were moved only a short distance, such as being set back on a lot or moved to an adjacent lot; others were moved from long distances into Kalispell.

Significance

A large number of buildings were moved to Kalispell from Demersville beginning in the spring of 1891. This represents an unusual aspect of Kalispell's history that merits recognition through National Register listings. Since there are no longer any buildings at the site of the once-busy town of Demersville, these buildings would be the only physical reminders of the town that once was the center of the activity in the Flathead Valley. Buildings known to have been moved include residences, stores, saloons, and boarding houses. Much of Demersville's physical structure actually formed the early core of the new town of Kalispell. Buildings moved from Demersville would be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A for their historical significance. They might also be eligible under other criteria. The property type is associated with the historic contexts of Movement of Buildings, 1891-1942, and Early Settlement and Community Development, 1891-1892.

As discussed in the context, an unusually large number of buildings in Kalispell have been moved from their original location during the historic period, perhaps because residents and contractors were experienced movers since the time of Kalispell's founding. The movement of buildings within and into Kalispell reflects the patterns of development of the town. Some were moved because the owner preferred a different location for the building, others to make way for a new building (this was especially common on Main Street, where wood frame buildings were replaced by brick buildings). In the 1950s, a number of buildings were moved into Kalispell from Hungry Horse upon the completion of the Hungry Horse

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Dam. Within the past few decades over a hundred buildings, both of recent and of pre-World War II construction, have been moved in Kalispell, generally by investors who then sell the property in its new location. Much of this recent movement has resulted from large commercial or institutional construction projects that have necessitated the removal or destruction of buildings on proposed building sites.

Registration Requirements

Although it is known from contemporary newspaper accounts that a large number of buildings were moved into Kalispell from Demersville, these have proved to be quite difficult to document. Many of the buildings that were specifically identified in newspapers by owners' names, locations, or business names have since been demolished or destroyed by fire. Others, such as residences, have been difficult to identify. There is currently only one building in Kalispell that has been confirmed as being moved from Demersville, and that is within the East Side Historic District. For a building to be eligible under this property type, the relocation should be documented by one or more primary sources, not just by oral histories or second- or third-hand information. (Many Kalispell property owners have been told that their building was originally located in Demersville, but the research for the Kalispell Historical Survey has found otherwise.) In addition, to meet registration requirements the property should retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to identify it as having been built between 1887 and 1891 and to evoke that period. The building could have been moved on log rollers, as was most commonly done, or it might have been taken apart and re-assembled in Kalispell. The current setting is not considered important. Because there are so few examples of buildings known to have been moved from Demersville, most such properties should be eligible for listing.

Buildings dating from the historic period that have been moved within historic districts are considered contributing. Other moved buildings may be eligible under Criterion C if they have been relocated to a compatible setting or under Criterion A if they illustrate an important or unusual pattern of development in the community during the historic period, such as the movement of a residence to take advantage of the purchase of a corner lot or the breaking up of one building to create several smaller buildings for resale. To meet registration requirements, the property should also retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to identify it as having been built during the historic period and to evoke that period. Buildings moved less than 50 years ago are not eligible under this property type, but they might be eligible under other property types if they retain sufficient integrity.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The city limits of the City of Kalispell, Montana.

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H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The multiple property listing of historic and architectural resources of Kalispell, Montana is based upon a 1980 reconnaissance survey of the city and a 1991-92 National Register nomination project. The reconnaissance survey of 1980 was conducted by Bruce Lutz, an architect with Taylor, Thon & Thompson (now Architects Design Group). The inventory identified four potential historic districts and an additional large number of properties that were potentially individually eligible for listing on the National Register. Approximately 2,600 properties were inventoried in 1980, with a photograph and a separate form for each. The historic districts were formally determined eligible for listing in 1982. Prior to the survey, the Conrad Mansion had been listed on the National Register. During the 1980s, four more properties within the survey area were listed individually on the National Register.

In 1991 the City of Kalispell and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office initiated the second phase of the project, the preparation of the documentation necessary to list the historic districts and individually eligible properties on the National Register. The principal investigator for this phase was Kathryn L. McKay, a historian with an M. A. in History from the University of Delaware. In addition to preparing National Register documentation, the inventory forms for properties outside of historic districts but within the survey area were revised and updated with historical and architectural information.

For historical documentation of the properties in the survey area, McKay relied heavily on local newspapers published during the historic period, plus a variety of secondary sources (particularly local histories by Henry Elwood and Flora Mae Bellefleur Isch). Pre-1970 tax appraisal records and building permits for Kalispell no longer exist. Other primary sources of information included the county plat records, pre-World War II county newspapers, Kalispell City Directories, the 1900, 1910 and 1920 federal census records, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from 1892 to 1956, miscellaneous items in the vertical files of the Flathead County Library, the papers and drawings of architect Fred Brinkman, various photograph collections, the obituary files (since 1970) of the Family History Library at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and annual City Water Department reports. Approximately 30 volunteers, mostly Kalispell residents, helped with the gathering and compiling of information. Within the historic districts, survey participants went door-to-door soliciting information from homeowners about their properties. Since many Kalispell residents have lived in their homes for decades, this proved to be quite valuable. McKay gave many talks on the survey to local clubs and other groups, and the local media printed several feature stories on the survey. This publicity encouraged people to call with information on particular properties or families. Several local historians and residents (Henry Elwood, Flora Mae Bellefleur Isch, Bill Schultz, and Henry Good) reviewed the draft historic context, adding valuable insights and additional sources of information and helping to resolve some conflicts in the source material.

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The 1991-92 survey included the area in the city north of Highway 2 that was not inventoried in 1980. Photographs and inventory forms were created for approximately 350 properties in this additional area. In addition, approximately 900 replacement photos were taken within the original survey area to document new construction and remodelings since 1980.

The repositories for the inventory forms and National Register documentation are the Flathead County Library in Kalispell, the Community Planning Department of the City of Kalispell, and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office in Helena. Other products of the survey include a 40-minute slide on the pre-World War II history of Kalispell and a walking tour brochure highlighting some of Kalispell's historic buildings.

The properties are grouped under nine historic contexts that conform to the themes identified during the research phase. The property types are organized functionally. Integrity requirements were based upon a knowledge of existing properties. The architectural and physical features of the city's finer surviving properties were considered in developing the outlines of potential registration requirements.

At the conclusion of the Kalispell Historical and Architectural Survey, four historic districts and 52 individual properties were submitted for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The Multiple Property Documentation Form covers all identified property types within the city limits (a larger area than the survey covered) to facilitate the addition of individual properties to the Register in the future. Properties outside the city limits may be listed using this form if they had clear ties to Kalispell.

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