

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Driver's Saloon and CaféOther names/site number: Starr Block, 24DL0821Name of related multiple property listing: Black Montana's Heritage Places Multiple Property Documentation

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 104-106 East Commercial AveCity or town: Anaconda State: Montana County: Deer LodgeNot For Publication: Vicinity: **3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D**MT State Historic Preservation Officer****Signature of certifying official/Title:****Date****State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:**Date****Title :****State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| <u>1</u> | <u> </u> | buildings |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> | sites |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> | structures |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> | objects |
| <u>1</u> | <u> </u> | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant, Professional (attorney's office)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVMENTS: Commercial style
(two-part commercial block with Italianate and Renaissance Rival elements)

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: STONE/granite

Walls: BRICK, METAL/cast iron

Roof: METAL, ASPHALT

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Starr Block, which housed Lee Pleasant Driver's Saloon and Cafe, occupies roughly the east 50 ft. of Lot 18 of Block 6 of the Original Anaconda Townsite, within the Anaconda-Butte Historic Landmark District, where it is counted as a contributing resource. The Starr Block is located within Anaconda's downtown commercial district and fronted by a concrete sidewalk. The building stands as a two-part commercial block displaying Italianate and Renaissance Revival elements. Architectural details, including a symmetrical façade, round-arched window openings, and cast-iron pilasters and columns (part of the original storefront), are characteristic of these styles. While the doors and windows have been altered, the property maintains integrity of location, setting, workmanship, design, feeling and association.

Narrative Description

The main volume is a rectangular (50 ft. by 25 ft.), two-story brick bearing building with a flat roof and a stone foundation. Cast iron elements on the façade define the building's three bays—two commercial storefronts divided by a narrow bay that may have contained an entry and stairway to the second story. A small half-story, lean-to brick volume on the rear may date to the original construction. A larger 16-ft. by 22.5-ft. one-story brick lean-to "storage" addition is

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located at the east end of the rear wall. The fire brick in the walls displays a running bond pattern.¹ A corbelled brick cornice extends along the front (southwest) side of the original volume, and the storage addition features a stepped parapet on the southeast side of the roof.

Southwest (front) wall: The cast iron elements on the front wall include four square pilasters that extend from the ground level to the top of the first story, dividing the façade into three bays—two commercial storefronts with recessed entryways, separated by a narrow bay. The words “Montana Iron Works / Butte Montana / 1888,” are embossed in the surface of the base of the cast iron column at the east and west ends of the façade. Round, narrow, cast-iron columns extend from the ground level to the top of the wall on each side of the recessed entryways. The ground floor walls of the commercial storefronts originally consisted of floor-to-ceiling glass display windows. However, the front walls paralleling the sidewalk have been partially filled in with narrow wood boards applied diagonally, while the angled wall sections are covered with vertical T-1-11 plywood. Vertical boards cover the central bay. A National Register sign is affixed to the front of this bay, roughly 4 ft. above the ground. The middle bay may contain an interior staircase and possibly originally contained an entrance to the Driver family’s second floor living quarters, which the family occupied during part of the period of significance.

Currently, both storefront entries contain modern, wood, X-braced doors with one light. In each storefront the two angled walls that flank the entry contain a window opening with one fixed light. The walls that parallel the sidewalk hold one window opening with two, one-light, fixed wood sashes. As originally designed, the walls adjacent to the entries in each commercial storefront contained full-height glass display windows.

A belt course, consisting of lapped horizontal boards, marks the boundary between the ground- and second -floor levels. Comparison with historical photos indicates that the lapped boards are not original to the building and may cover the original belt course, which appears to be either cast iron and/or brick. The wall above the belt course mirrors the symmetry of the ground floor: Square brick pilasters extend from the belt course above the ground-floor pilasters, dividing the wall into three bays. The two bays above the storefronts each contain three, round-arched window openings that hold a pair of one-over-one-light wood window sashes. The narrow central bay contains a round-arched window opening filled with a single one-over-one-light sash. A continuous tile sill runs along the base of the window openings in each of the three bays. Distinctive elements of the round-arch window openings include a narrow projecting cornice detail (apparently made of tile) located slightly above the sash and window hoods. The area within the arch above the window sash is-filled with an unidentified material, likely replacing original fixed lights, and currently covered with stucco. A decorative, corbelled brick cornice extends across the top of the building above the window openings and onto the adjacent Copinus/Ida block.

Southeast (side) wall: On the southeast side wall the main volume holds two small window openings evenly spaced within the second story. While these openings display round arches, they lack the detail in the brick work found in the front windows. Both openings contain one-over-one-light wood sashes. A small ‘ghost’ sign, painted in white and black, remains visible at the

¹ Note that the brick in the adjacent / connecting Copinus / Ida Block presents an English bond pattern.

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south edge of the wall. The word "General" remains discernible, with remaining writing faded to the point of illegibility.

The one-story storage addition exhibits an entry adjacent to the junction with the main volume and two window openings. All three openings have arches at the top. The entry contains a modern, four-panel wood door. The original transom opening above the door has been filled with plywood. The window openings feature brick sills and have been filled in with vertical, T-1-11 plywood siding.

Northeast (rear) wall: The storage addition at the east end of the rear of the building contains no door or window openings. The half-story lean-to volume contains two arched window-openings, both filled with plywood. A wood staircase extends eastward diagonally from the ground level in front of the half-story volume, providing access to a landing at the second story level. The east end of the landing, which features a shed roof, is supported by the roof of the storage addition, indicating that its construction occurred after that of the addition. The second-floor entry, accessed from the landing, holds a flush wood door within an arched opening. Plywood covers the transom above the door. The east end of the landing partially covers an arched in-filled window opening.

The second story level west of the stairway and landing displays another arched window opening and is filled with a one-over-one-light wood sash. As with the window openings on the front and side walls, the transom is filled in with plywood.

Integrity

Driver's Saloon & Cafe retains solid integrity in most respects. The building stands in its original location. Although a few newer buildings dot the neighborhood, the setting retains many of the early Anaconda buildings that occupied the nearby lots historically, including to the south, east and north. The presence of these historic buildings help convey the Driver's Saloon & Café's feeling and association. The installation of narrow wood boards applied diagonally over what once was floor-to-ceiling glass display windows and the alteration of door and windows in the south façade diminishes the overall integrity of design, workmanship and materials. However, the presence of the vertical cast iron columns and elements allude to the façade's original lower story presentation and the excellent integrity displayed in the other walls, especially the upper story south facade and east wall retain virtually all of the architectural elements incorporated into the building.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

Period of Significance

1909-1915

Significant Dates

1909

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

D.F. McDevitt (Architect)

Smith and Gilmour (Builders)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Constructed in 1889 and occupied from ca. 1909-1915 by Driver's Saloon and Café, the Starr Block is significant and individually eligible for listing in the National Register as a residential and commercial property associated with the history of Black Montana.² Occupied by Anaconda's most prominent Black businessman who operated a bar and restaurant on the premises, the brick two-story commercial block initially also housed Lee Pleasant and Pearl Payne Driver and their toddler son Lee Jr. above their street-level saloon and eatery, prominently situated near the intersection of Main St. and Commercial Avenue. The 106 E. Commercial establishment was the last and largest of the restaurant and bar businesses that Lee Driver operated near the central downtown intersection of Main and Commercial for some 20 years (ca. 1895-1915). Driver, a Fisk graduate and 25th Infantry veteran (discharged at Fort Missoula in 1891), previously operated a saloon in Missoula, ca. 1892-93: his Anaconda saloon and café was

² Driver's Saloon and Café is listed as a contributing element of the Butte-Anaconda Historic District (1966), revised documentation 2006.

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the most visible and substantial Black-owned business in town. It served African American and other customers and also functioned as a focal point, and physical and institutional core, of the local Black community, an exemplar of Black achievement, and an autonomous space managed by, and supportive of, African American residents.

Driver's Saloon and Café represents two of the five historic contexts documented in the *Black Montana's Heritage Places Multiple Property Documentation*: "III. The Heyday of Black Montana, ca. 1877-1910s;" and "IV. A Shifting West: Decline, Ascent & Endurance in Montana's Black Community, ca. 1910s-1940." Eligible for listing under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A, Driver's Saloon and Café is significantly associated with the Montana African American community during the community's peak years in the early 20th century, and it closed during Black Montana's post-1910 contraction.

The property's period of significance extends from the Drivers' initial rental of the property, ca. 1909, to 1915, when they closed their downtown bar and café business and moved about 12 miles east of town (near Opportunity), where they homesteaded, and in 1923 patented, 275 acres of land. The 1909 date represents the significant date for the property. On their homestead, the Drivers raised seven children while Lee worked for the Anaconda Copper Mining Company. Their descendants went on to become prominent members of Montana's Black community in their own right, and the family continues to be an integral part of the state.

Driver's Saloon and Café is also eligible for listing in the National Register Criterion C. The building stands as a fine example of a two-part commercial block that displays aspects of both Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles. After its 1889 construction, the building featured commercial storefronts on the street level and second-story rooms that provided a variety of functions and uses. The building exhibits the characteristic horizontal division that defines the two zones of use.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Copper King Marcus Daly established Anaconda in 1883, and as Anaconda developed, so too did a significant Black population, which subsequently grew with the town itself. In 1889, Daly "brought in 12 [African Americans] to work as waiters and porters in his new Montana Hotel and a few years later two or three more to work in his private railroad car."³ The Montana Hotel staff and other 1880s Black residents were joined in subsequent years by more members of the state's growing Black community, and by 1890 census enumerators counted 37 African Americans in Anaconda. The town and its African American population continued to grow thereafter, and among the new arrivals was Lee Pleasant Driver, discharged from the 25th Infantry in Missoula in 1891, and after operating a bar there, ca. 1892-93, moved to Anaconda. Shortly thereafter, in

³ Patrick Morris, *Anaconda, Montana: Copper Smelting Boom Town on the Western Frontier* (Bethesda, MD: Swann, 1997), 290, http://www.worldcat.org/title/anaconda-montana-copper-smelting-boom-town-on-the-western-frontier/oclc/38107353&referer=brief_results.

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1896, local publishers compiled an Anaconda city directory. Likely listing only adults, it contained information for 86 “colored” residents.⁴

Driver quickly became one of the town’s most prominent Black citizens. Details of his birth remain unclear—he was born ca. 1863, probably in Tennessee, most likely to enslaved parents named Pleasant and Mary Elizabeth Hayes: according to one Mary Driver’s 1872 Freedmen’s Bureau application, her previous husband Pleasant died, and after his death Mary Hayes wed Samuel Driver (their marriage was formalized in 1872).⁵ Raised in Tennessee by Mary Hayes and Samuel Driver, Lee Pleasant Driver excelled academically, and after high school he taught grade school in Memphis for several years before attending Fisk University. There he studied alongside W.E.B. DuBois, as well as Mary Murray, who later married Booker T. Washington. In December 1888, Lee enlisted in the segregated “colored” 25th Infantry unit of the United States Army, traveling west with the invading American military and rising to the rank of corporal before being discharged, in May 1891, in Missoula. By the time he settled in Anaconda, 30-year-old Lee Driver was well-educated and worldly, already an experienced and highly accomplished man.

At the time of Driver’s arrival, Anaconda was heavily male, and many people lived in downtown lodging houses or hotels. This was true of the smelter town’s African American population as well, who formed what one historian called an “identifiable ethnic enclave” that “occupied the south end of West Commercial Avenue.”⁶ Driver joined this downtown workers’ community and must have seen opportunity in the crowded lodging house district. By ca. 1895, Lee roomed at 120 W. Commercial, where he also ran a “lunch counter.” Mr. Driver lived on the premises with his sister Lizzie Driver as well as a number of other lodgers, among them the African American Johnsons (Nellie along with Harry B. and Edwin, both cooks). Lee Driver’s lunch counter was prominently located near Commercial Avenue’s intersection with Main Street, just off the busy railroad tracks that anchored Anaconda’s downtown commercial district. It quickly became a substantial business that employed other people besides its proprietor, including by around 1895 at least one other Black man, King Johnson, who worked there as a cook.⁷

Lee Driver subsequently operated restaurant and bar businesses, and resided, near the central downtown Anaconda intersection of Main and Commercial for some 20 years. Sometimes he worked other jobs as well—the 1900 census enumerated him as a “porter” who lived at 115 Main

⁴ Census Office, “Report on Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890 (Part I & Part II)” (Dept. of the Interior, 1895), sec. Table 19, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1895/dec/volume-1.html>; “Driver, Lee P.,” March 3, 1927, U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934, Ancestry.com; “Application for Headstone [Lee P Driver],” April 13, 1935, U.S., Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1925-1970, Ancestry.com; “Official,” *Missoulian*, September 15, 1892; “Quarter Ending Nov 30 (Liquor License),” *Missoulian*, January 18, 1893; Louis J. Pierce comp, *Anaconda City Directory, 1896 ...* (Anaconda, Montana: Evans & McMurray, 1896).

⁵ “Record for Mary (Pleasant) Driver,” n.d., U.S., Freedman’s Bank Records, 1865-1874, Ancestry.com; “Samuel Driver & Mary E. Hayes,” May 10, 1872, Tennessee, U.S., Marriage Records, 1780-2002, Ancestry.com.

⁶ Kimberly Currie Morrison, “Historical and Architectural Properties of Anaconda, Montana,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, December 1995.

⁷ Louis J. Pierce comp, *Anaconda City Directory, 1896*.

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Street alongside at least four other Black residents—but his bar and restaurant businesses stood as a prominent feature of Anaconda's downtown, and a cornerstone of the area's Black community, from about 1895-1915.⁸

Over the years, Driver's downtown Anaconda business occupied several locations in the blocks converging at Main and Commercial. A 1902 newspaper article described Driver as "proprietor of colored club on Front Street," and the Anaconda City Directory that year listed his "club rooms" business at 15 Main (around the corner from Front), in a brick two-part commercial block where he also roomed. The following year, another newspaper article referred to his enterprise as Driver's Saloon, and in 1905 it was listed—in the "saloons" section of the Anaconda City Directory—at 12 Main Street. There, Driver sold his "Choice Line of Wines, Liquors and Cigars," until around 1909, when he moved back to the block across the street (on the east side of Main), this time to another brick two-part commercial block around the corner at 104-106 E. Commercial Avenue.⁹

With this move, Driver's Saloon and Café settled into one of the town's "prominent downtown landmark[s]." Built ca. 1889 for Jewish merchant Wolfe William Copinus, the substantial and noteworthy Starr Block—along with the adjoining Ida/Copinus Block—was designed by Butte architect D. F. McDevitt and constructed by contractors Smith and Gilmour. Its handsome, unusual Italianate/Renaissance Revival façade was highly visible from downtown's main intersection. By the time Driver moved his business and home into the two-part commercial block it had been through a series of owners. In April 1909, the Starr Block was owned by A. J. Tuchscherer, likely also Jewish, and Mr. Tuchscherer rented it to Mr. Driver.¹⁰

When Lee Pleasant Driver moved his longtime downtown business to the Starr Block, he was newly married and a father. In August 1907, Lee married Pearl Payne, who moved to town from Chicago the previous January. Son Lee Pleasant Jr. was born the following year. With the bar and restaurant's shift to the two-part Starr Block, the family moved their residence into the second-story rooms above the business—the census enumerated them there in 1910—and L.P. Driver's saloon continued to prosper.¹¹ Driver expanded his advertising, with bolded listings not only in the "restaurants" and the "saloons" sections of city directories but also ads for "L.P. Driver's Café" in the region's Black newspaper, the *Plaindealer*, published in Helena. [see attached image] From his Starr Block storefronts, proprietor Lee P. Driver offered "Fine Wines, Liquors and Cigars," with "Café in Connection." His café menu may have featured such things as squab: in 1912, "L.P Driver had a shipment of 200 pigeons in his private coop that was

⁸ Bureau of the Census, "12th Census of the United States, 1900: Population Schedules: Montana" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1978), <http://archive.org/details/12thcensusofpopu913unit>.

⁹ R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory* (R.L. Polk & Co., n.d.); "He Sold Liquor Without A License," *Butte Miner*, July 24, 1902; "[Stolen Horse]," *Anaconda Standard*, September 22, 1903.

¹⁰ "Starr Block (Anaconda Site Survey Form)"; "Lot 18, Block 6, Anaconda Original Townsite," n.d., 18, Deed Records, Deer Lodge County Clerk and Recorder.

¹¹ "Driver-Payne Marriage Record," August 19, 1907, Montana, U.S., County Marriages, 1865-1987, Ancestry.com; Bureau of the Census, "13th Census of the United States, 1910: Population Schedules: Montana" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1910), <http://archive.org/details/13thcensus1910po833unit>.

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looted,” with police subsequently questioning a man who they found several nights later “reeling along Commercial Avenue ... picking the bones of a squab.”¹²

Despite the pigeon heist, Driver's business apparently thrived, and in November 1911, he purchased from local Jewish resident I. Rosenfield, a one-story commercial building comprising two storefronts at 112 E. Commercial (two lots southeast of his bar and restaurant). Around the same time, the Driver family moved its residential quarters into second-floor lodgings at 114 E. Commercial, next door to their new property.¹³ The Driver family, thus, owned or occupied three of the commercial buildings on the first block of E. Commercial at downtown Anaconda's main intersection.

The prominent Anaconda business family also stood as a pillar of the local and regional Black community, and Lee Driver's business places became important community spaces. When Driver arrived in Anaconda around 1895, the city directory—likely listing only adults—contained 86 “colored” residents. In 1900, the census counted a Black population of 135, making Anaconda the third largest African American community in the state.¹⁴ As with other groups in Anaconda and elsewhere in this period, many African Americans lived in downtown lodging houses or hotels: an “identifiable ethnic enclave” of the Black population lived around central Commercial Avenue near Driver's Saloon.¹⁵ As the Anaconda community grew and diversified, a visible Black business sector developed apace, with Driver's Saloon its flagship enterprise.

As elsewhere, in Anaconda Black-owned businesses, like clubs and cafes, served as a focal point for the community, providing not only services and jobs, but also shared Black spaces that supported a variety of collective activities, from casual socializing to hosting meetings of political groups and other organizations. Black-owned businesses were themselves important institutions in Anaconda and the broader Montana Black community of which it was part. Other organized aspects of early Black Anaconda developed in conjunction with the broader community as well. Residents established a local African Methodist Episcopal congregation during the 1890s and in June 1903 Reverend Jordan Allen, of Butte's Shaffer Chapel, laid the cornerstone for the Anaconda church.¹⁶

By then, the Black community began to build an array of active local organizations. In its October 12, 1906 issue, the *Plaindealer* reported that an Anaconda Black Masons group met

¹² “Mike Casey and a Squab Interest the Anaconda Sleuths,” *Butte Daily Post*, January 17, 1912; “L. P. Driver's Cafe [Advertisement],” *Montana Plaindealer*, October 14, 1910; R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory*.

¹³ “Lot 18, Block 6, Anaconda Original Townsite,” 21; R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory*.

¹⁴ Louis J. Pierce comp, *Anaconda City Directory, 1896 ...*; Bureau of the Census, “12th Census of Population, 1900 [Microform].”

¹⁵ Morrison, “Historical and Architectural Properties of Anaconda, Montana.”

¹⁶ Sherry Michelle Teal, “Shaffer's Chapel A.M.E. Church,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Montana Preservation Alliance, December 2017); Bureau of the Census, “12th Census of Population, 1900 [Microform].” MT SHPO, “African-Americans in Montana Timeline,” accessed July 20, 2016, <http://svcult.mt.gov/research/AfricanAmerican/AAinMTTimelineMain.asp>.

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twice a month, and soon the Copper City Social Club was making the news.¹⁷ In 1908, "the Negroes of Anaconda" also organized Copper City Lodge No. 7885 of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows. The following year, the Copper City Lodge celebrated its first anniversary with a special service at Allen Chapel. The anniversary ceremonies included a sermon by Reverend William Gaillard, an address by Charles A. Young, and a financial report by L. P. Driver, which showed the lodge to be "in a most prosperous position."¹⁸

An exemplar of Black achievement, Driver's Saloon & Café—an autonomous space managed by, and supportive of, African American residents—served as both a physical and institutional core of the local Black community. Sometimes newspapers described the business itself as a "colored club," while the 1902 city directory listed Driver as proprietor of "club rooms," and in addition to serving the city of Anaconda as a bar and restaurant L.P. Driver's business hosted various Black community organizations and events. In 1908, the community's Copper City Social Club held its May Day ball at Driver's Saloon (then at 12 Main) and in 1909, "L.P. Driver's colored club" served refreshments in conjunction with the Black community's Christmas dance at Odd Fellows hall." When in October 1910, "the colored voters of Anaconda organized a political club...the Negro Republican Club...L.P. Driver, president," the club headquartered at 104. E. Commercial.¹⁹

The Drivers were prominent community members in realms outside of their downtown properties as well. In 1908, when Driver's establishment hosted the Copper City Social Club's May Day ball, Driver also co-managed the affair, "first class in every particular." At the same time, "colored baseball enthusiasts" organized a local team, the Anaconda Browns. The team that L.P. Driver served as treasurer, boasted "a full roster of officers, privates, and mascots." Later that year, in December 1908, "the colored men of the city . . . organized a lodge of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows . . . [with] treasurer, L. P. Driver." In 1909, two weeks after the Allen Chapel anniversary ceremonies for the Copper City Odd Fellows Lodge No. 7885, the Copper City Social Club hosted a reception and dance in the hall adjoining the Empire Theater following a performance at the Margaret Theater by the Black Patti traveling troupe. The committee in charge of the affair comprised four men, including L.P. Driver, who also "presided at the refreshment booth."²⁰

While they built a business and served as leaders in the Black community, the Drivers also raised a growing family. Pearl Driver gave birth to second son William Leonard around 1911, and in summer 1912, had another boy, Lewis P., who died in infancy (with his funeral held at "the

¹⁷ "Anaconda Notes," *Montana Plaindealer*, October 12, 1906; "Anaconda Notes," *The Montana Plaindealer*, May 29, 1908; "[Copper City Social Club]," *Anaconda Standard*, May 14, 1908; "Reception to Singer," *Butte Daily Post*, May 24, 1909.

¹⁸ "New Lodge of Colored Men," *Butte Daily Post*, December 8, 1908; "Grand United Odd Fellows," *Butte Daily Post*, May 10, 1909.

¹⁹ "[Negro Republican Club]," *Anaconda Standard*, October 14, 1910; "[Copper City Social Club]"; "Colored Celebration," *Butte Daily Post*, December 25, 1909.

²⁰ "[Copper City Social Club]"; "Baseball Team Organized," *Anaconda Standard*, May 6, 1908; "New Lodge of Colored Men"; "Grand United Odd Fellows"; "Reception to Singer."

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family home at 114 East Commercial Avenue"). In 1914, Pearl gave birth to a daughter, whom the Drivers named Genevieve. Another son, Woodrow, was soon on his way.²¹

While the Drivers' family grew, the local and regional community that supported, and was supported by, their bar, café, and community space shrank. Montana's total Black population began to decline in the years after 1910, and in Anaconda, the next decennial census showed a local Black population reduced by over 25%.²² Decline in state and local Black populations undermined Black businesses and community institutions, like Driver's saloon, which even in more populous times operated in the context of a broadly White supremacist society that specifically targeted Black places, like Driver's, that provided social space for the community, as well as for interracial socializing.

At some point, possibly expecting their next child, the Drivers decided to shutter their downtown business endeavors and move to a homestead out of town. In January 1915, they sold their 112 E. Commercial property to A. J. Tuscherer, who owned the Starr Block, and by April the Starr Block space they'd rented at 104-106 E. Commercial sat vacant. That month, "the empty building formerly occupied by L. P. Driver on East Commercial Avenue" was "looted." On a Tuesday evening, thieves broke in and "took fixtures from the place and going through a door to a small restaurant adjoining got away with some canned goods." By the end of August 1915, Tuchscherer sold the Starr Block to the Anaconda Brewing Company.²³

The Driver family moved about 12 miles east of Anaconda, to "the Henlsey Gulch area north of Opportunity," where they homesteaded, and in 1923 patented 275 acres of land. Around 1916, Pearl Driver gave birth to another son, Woodrow, followed by daughter Alyce Marjorie in 1917 and son Felix around 1919. In 1922, Pearl had son Paul, the last of the Driver children. Raising their seven surviving children on their ranch, the Drivers supplemented Lee's wages from the Anaconda Copper Mining Company reduction works, where, according to granddaughter Joan Duncan, "Lee helped design and built the smelter."²⁴

Now the "tallest surviving masonry structure in the world," the Anaconda smelter stack was completed in 1918, and subsequently, Lee Driver worked for the company in different capacities,

²¹ "Funeral of Wee Boy," *Butte Daily Post*, July 26, 1912; Bureau of the Census, "14th Census of the United States, 1920: Population Schedules: Montana" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1992), <http://archive.org/details/14thcensusofpopu972unit>.

²² U.S. Census Bureau, "Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910: Volume II. Population, Reports by States, with Statistics for Counties, Cities, and Other Civil Divisions: Alabama-Montana," 1913, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1913/dec/vol-2-population.html>; US Census Bureau, "1920 Census: Fourteenth Census of the United States, State Compendium, Montana," Census.gov, accessed April 7, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1924/dec/state-compendium.html>.

²³ "Building Looted," *Anaconda Standard*, April 22, 1915; "Lot 21, Block 6, Anaconda Original Townsite," n.d., Deed Records, Deer Lodge County Clerk and Recorder; "Lot 18, Block 6, Anaconda Original Townsite," 18.

²⁴ J. Ray Haffey and James S. Rosien, *Anaconda's Foundation: People and Landmarks*, n.d., 12; "General Land Office Records," U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, accessed May 1, 2020, <https://glorerecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx>; Bureau of the Census, "14th Census of the United States, 1920: Population Schedules: Montana."

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including many "years as a janitor in the general office." Sons Lee Jr., and then William L. Driver joined Lee at the Anaconda Company when teenagers, and together the family worked and ranched through the 1920s. Around 1930, Lee's health began to fail. Like many Anaconda workers, he developed progressive lung problems. In the fall of 1934, his illness brought him to the Fort Harrison Veteran's Hospital in Helena, where four months later, in January 1935, he died at the age of about 71 of "tuberculosis, pulmonary, chronic, advanced."²⁵ Butte newspapers reported on the death of the "well known" "valley rancher" who was "a veteran of the Indian wars." Coverage noted his funeral at P.J. Finnegan's funeral home and St. Paul's church before burial, with military honors, at the family plot at Mt Carmel cemetery.

Surviving Lee Pleasant Driver were his widow Pearl and the seven Driver children, as well as a sister, Mary, in Texas. Pearl remained on the ranch before relocating to Butte, with the kids attending Anaconda schools (despite them living across the Silver Bow County line).²⁶ As they grew into young adults, the Driver children moved off the ranch, six of them marrying other members of the Montana Black community. In 1938, Alyce Marjorie Driver married Walter Duncan, of Butte, and that same year in Billings, her brother William married Mattie Montana Waite (whom he divorced in 1945). In 1940, Lee P. Driver Jr. married Havre native Daisy Ross, relocating to his wife's hometown thereafter. Lee and Daisy divorced within a few years (after their second child, infant daughter Ida, died), and in 1943, Lee married an indigenous Havre woman, born in Oswego, Montana, named Maebelle Fortymes, with whom he raised a family in Havre. Woodrow Driver also wed in 1940, marrying Mary Alva Mundy of Helena. Two years later, Felix Driver married Mary Mundy's younger sister, Ruth. In 1946, daughter Genevieve Driver married Herbert Brown, of the longtime Butte-area Brown family.²⁷ The youngest of Lee and Pearl Driver's children, Paul, worked in the area for several years after graduating from Anaconda High School and then enlisting in the U.S. Army in 1944. In the wake of WWII, Paul went to school in Butte and Havre and eventually gained admission to graduate school at the University of Oregon, where he earned his Ph.D. in Biology.²⁸

²⁵ "Anaconda Smelter Stack," in *Wikipedia*, October 19, 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anaconda_Smelter_Stack&oldid=1050635241; "Valley Rancher Claimed by Death," *Montana Standard*, January 12, 1935; R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory*; "Standard Certificate of Death, State of Montana (Lee Pleasant Driver)," January 11, 1935, Montana, U.S., State Deaths, 1907-2018, Ancestry.com; "Anaconda Death Notices," *Montana Standard*, January 13, 1935; "Veteran Dies," *Independent Record*, January 11, 1935.

²⁶ "Driver Services Will Be Tuesday," *Montana Standard*, January 13, 1935; "Veteran Dies"; "Valley Rancher Claimed by Death"; "Anaconda Death Notices"; "Notice from Anaconda," *Montana Standard*, May 24, 1933.

²⁷ "Ancestry.Com - Montana, County Marriages, 1865-1950," accessed August 22, 2016, http://interactive.ancestry.com/60062/MM9.3.1_2FTH-267-11755-43940-69/505811?backlabel=ReturnRecord&backurl=http%3a%2f%2fsearch.ancestry.com%2f%2fcgi-bin%2fsse.dll%3findiv%3d1%26db%3dFS1MontanaCoMarriages%26h%3d505811%26tid%3d%26pid%3d%26usePUB%3dtrue%26_phsrc%3dwbk152%26_phstart%3dsuccessSource%26usePUBjs%3dtrue%26rhSource%3d4654&ssrc=

²⁸ R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory*; R.L. Polk & Co, *Butte City Directory* (R.L. Polk & Co., n.d.); "U.S., World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946 - Ancestry.Com," accessed April 8, 2022, https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/4682875:8939?tid=&pid=&queryId=1f990f551bf94a3a60b7e13a7762d257&_phsrc=Kuu930

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After marrying, several Driver children and their spouses remained in the Anaconda area, where they were prominent residents. Lee Pleasant Driver Jr., William Leonard, Woodrow, and Felix all worked for the Anaconda Company in the 1940s (as did Paul before he moved away), and Woodrow, at least, continued with the company for decades. By 1961, his son Woodrow Jr. joined him there, as did his son John Henry Driver soon thereafter. Woodrow and Felix and their Mundy wives Mary and Ruth raised their families in Anaconda (as did Mary and Ruth's two sisters, who married into the Harris and Jackson families), and Driver descendants live there still.

Other descendants of Lee Pleasant and Pearl Payne Driver reside elsewhere in Montana, especially in nearby Butte (where Driver daughters Alyce and Genevieve settled). Pearl Payne Driver stayed on the east valley ranch until at least the late 1940s. Around 1947, she moved to Butte, and in 1948, area directories showed her residing there in a home she owned at 2322 Moulton that she shared with her son Paul (a college student). She remained at her Moulton Street home until she died in 1963. Newspaper coverage of her death noted that she had been "a resident of Butte and Anaconda more than 50 years," and that six of her seven children still lived in Montana (in Anaconda, Butte, Havre, and Billings).²⁹

While the extended Driver family built lives across the Big Sky, the Starr Block that housed the last and largest iteration of Lee Driver's Saloon and Café endured in downtown Anaconda. The town population—always tightly tied to industrial production and Anaconda Company work—ebbed and rose with the economic tides, and the property underwent a series of ownership changes over the years. In 1915, shortly after acquiring it, the Anaconda Brewing Company conveyed the Starr Block and the Ida Block (that it also acquired that year) to Purdon Smith Hall, and thereafter, the two adjoining Copinus-built commercial blocks remained in common ownership. Hall conveyed them to Oscar Carlson in 1938, who in turn conveyed them to Joseph Lombardi in 1949. The Lombardi family owned Lot 18, containing the Ida and Starr blocks, until 1976.³⁰

During much of that time, the Starr Block continued to serve downtown Anaconda in standard two-part commercial block fashion, featuring a variety of retail and commercial enterprises in its street-level storefront spaces with offices, meeting space, and/or lodging above. Immediately after Driver's tenancy, in 1916, the building contained the Western Electric Company, as well as a women's furnishing store run by Emma Stroh and the laundry business of Jimmy Lee. In the 1930s, it continued to house a "Chinese laundry," along with "a soft drink shop and a paint store."³¹

&_phstart=successSource; Anthony Wood, "Lee Pleasant Driver's Saloon and Club Rooms (MT Historic Property Record, #24DL0821)," August 3, 2016.

²⁹ R.L. Polk & Co, *Anaconda City Directory*; "Grandma Cooked for Custer," *Billings Gazette*, June 26, 1960; Haffey and Rosien, *Anaconda's Foundation: People and Landmarks*, 11; R.L. Polk & Co, *Butte City Directory*; "Pearl Driver Taken By Death," *Montana Standard*, n.d.

³⁰ "Lot 18, Block 6, Anaconda Original Townsite."

³¹ "Starr Block (Anaconda Site Survey Form)."

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Over the years, subsequent Starr Block tenants may have included other members of Anaconda's Black community, for the area around the intersection of Main and Commercial continued to contain numerous associated entities. Local historians note that "from the turn of the century to the 1930s there were two or three so-called 'Negro clubs' that were share by multiple class and racial groups. Atlantic Club was approved as a clubhouse for 'colored' people by the city council in November 1916. The location at 114 W. Commercial would be run by a proprietor named Edwin 'Checkers' Shears," who also managed the Silver City Giants baseball team. Checkers operated the Atlantic Club through at least the 1920s.³² Percy Harris also was involved with Commercial Street "colored clubs" around the time the Atlantic opened. In 1918, the *Anaconda Standard* reported him working for "an East Commercial Street colored club," and by 1925, it noted "Percy Harris' colored club at 204 E. Commercial Street."³³ Sometime "later in the century there was the Harlem Club at 317 E. Commercial Ave. ... Percy Harris and his wife Jackie ran the club through the 1960s."³⁴

Architectural Significance

Driver's Saloon and Café is also significant under Criterion C as an exemplar of the two-part commercial block. In typical two-part commercial block fashion, the building housed a variety of businesses and individuals after its construction in 1889, with commercial storefronts on the street level and second-story rooms providing space for lodging, club meetings, and/or professional offices. Remaining throughout a center of community life, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the two-part commercial block, "the most common form for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings in the United States." This form, "characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones ... [that] reflects differences in its interior use," proliferated between 1850 and 1950, and was a fixture of main streets in small towns across the country. Although not strictly adhering to a single style, the building presents aspects of both Italianate and Renaissance Revival—including a symmetrical façade, round-arched window openings, and cast-iron pilasters and columns—and its associated "detailing is unique to Anaconda's Commercial Historic District."³⁵

³² Haffey and Rosien, *Anaconda's Foundation: People and Landmarks*, 10–11.

³³ "He Played Lookout and Got a Look In," *Anaconda Standard*, February 28, 1918; "Negro Slashed in Club Battle," *Anaconda Standard*, August 19, 1925.

³⁴ Morrison, "Historical and Architectural Properties of Anaconda, Montana."

³⁵ "Starr Block (Anaconda Site Survey Form)," n.d., Historic Preservation Office, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Planning Department; "Two-Part Block Commercial Style," Buffalo Architecture and History, accessed August 22, 2022, <https://buffaloah.com/a/archsty/2block/2block.html>.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☒ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre (UTM provided is approximate center of the parcel)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 46.130330 Longitude: -112.951950

2. Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary for Driver's Saloon and Café corresponds to the Starr Block, located in the east 50 ft. of Lot 18 of Block 6 of the Anaconda Original Town Site, in Anaconda, Montana.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the building used as a commercial establishment and residence by Lee Driver and his family between 1909 and 1915.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Delia Hagen, PhD
organization: Hagen Historical Consulting (HHC)
street & number: 210 N. Higgins Ave., Suite 328
city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59802
e-mail: deliahagen@yahoo.com
telephone: (406) 360-0120
date: August 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

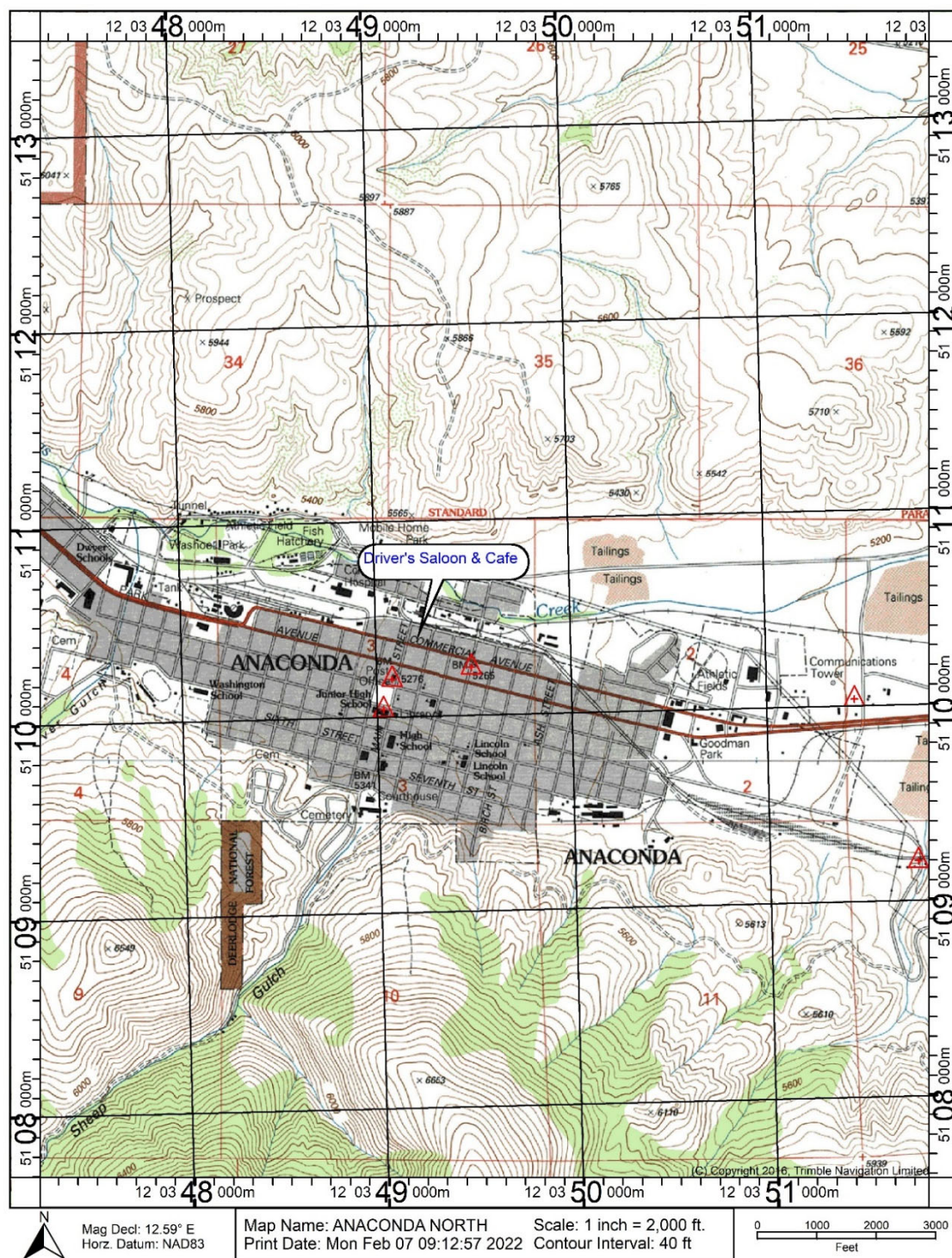
Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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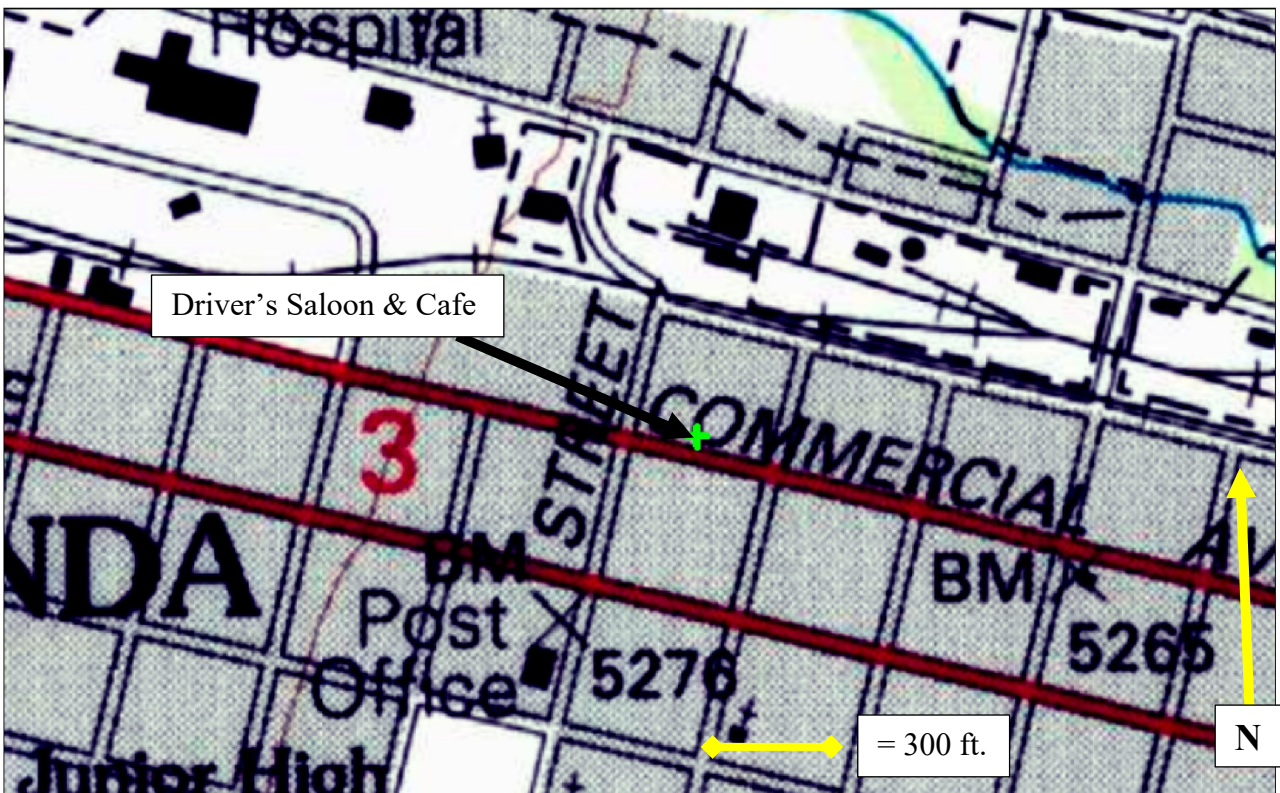
Additional Documentation—Maps and Aerials



Portion of the 1996 USGS Anaconda North topographic quadrangle showing the location of Driver's Saloon & Cafe.

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Location of Driver's Saloon & Café, Found on the Anaconda North 7.5' Topographic Map.

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Google Earth image (2014) showing the location of Driver's Saloon and Café at 104-106 East Commercial Ave., Anaconda, MT.

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Historic Photographs



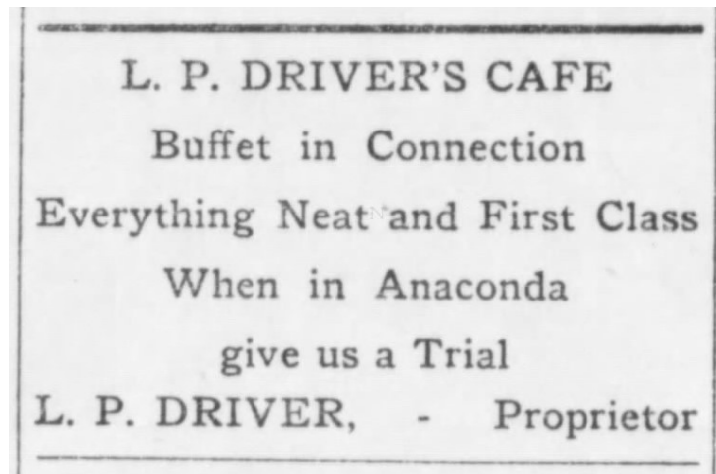
Lee Pleasant Driver, date unknown



The Ida/Copinus Block, with part of adjoining Starr Block (right), ca. 1914-1918
(reprinted from Haffey and Rosein, *Anaconda's Foundation*)

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Newspaper advertisement, *Montana Plaindealer* (Helena), October 10, 1910



Pearl Payne Driver and son Woodrow Driver, date unknown (ca. 1940s)

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National Register Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Driver's Saloon and Cafe

City or Vicinity: Anaconda

County: Deer Lodge State: Montana

Photographer: Delia Hagen

Date Photographed: 02/02/2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:



MT_DeerLodge_DriversSaloonCafe_001: Looking north at the front (southwest) wall of Driver's Saloon and Cafe.

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MT_DeerLodge_DriversSaloonCafe_002: Looking west at the southeast side wall of Driver's Saloon and Café (storage addition to right of photo).

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MT_DeerLodge_DriversSaloonCafe_003 of 5: Looking southwest to the northeast (rear) wall of Driver's Saloon and Café.

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MT_DeerLodge_DriversSaloonCafe_004. Detail of the iron storefront with maker's mark
"Montana / Iron Works / Butte, MT. / 1888"

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MT_DeerLodge_DriversSaloonCafe_005. Ghost sign on the southeast (side) wall adjacent to the alley.

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- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
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