



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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JUN 20 1988

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Olive Hotel  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 501 Main Street  not for publication  
city, town Miles City  vicinity  
state Montana code 030 county Custer code 017 zip code 59301

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Maella Shiff Date 6-9-88  
State or Federal agency and bureau Montana SHPO

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

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Patrick Andrews 10/13/88  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

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Domestic: hotel

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Domestic: hotel

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

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commercial style

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foundation concrete

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walls brick

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concrete

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roof asphalt

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other

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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The Olive Hotel is situated on a prominent corner on Main Street in Miles City, across from the city park and at the entrance to the commercial district from the west. The hotel was built between 1898-1899, and enlarged in 1908 with a new front section, including a recessed entry and redecorated lobby, a three-story addition to the rear, and a major addition of rooms and street level commercial space to the east. The two poured concrete garages located to the rear of the hotel across the alley and built in 1908 and 1912 contribute to the significance of the property.

The Olive Hotel rests on a concrete foundation. A locally produced, soft red brick was used in the construction of the 1890's, three-story portion of the building. Window lintels are brownstone and three-course, header brick relieving arches are present above the second story, one-over-one, double hung windows. The third floor windows share a continuous brownstone sill set above a dentilated belt course and relieving arches feature brick voussoirs. A linked chain frieze of corbelled brick encircles the original portion of the building at the cornice level.

The front, east, and north portions of the hotel were constructed in 1908 of pressed Hebron brick of light yellow, brown and olive green tints. The eastern and northern additions more than doubled the size of the building, and the final composition is a U-shaped building with an courtyard accessed from the alley that was kept as a garden during the historic period. A wooden water tank, no longer in use, is perched above the building over the opening to the courtyard. The rear portion of the building follows the fenestration patterns and use of materials of the 1890's portion.

The front addition extended the building one bay to the south, and brought the front elevation to the lot line on Main Street. Designed by local architect Brynjulf Rivenes, this addition created an entirely new facade for the hotel and joins the 1890's portion to the 1908 east addition as a single composition. Windows are again one-over-one, double hung units, flanking large fixed windows with transoms above on the second story, and set in pairs on the third. Light yellow brick belt courses run at the third floor window sill level, are used to enliven the simple dentilated frieze beneath the bracketed, pressed metal cornice and appear as coping. The street level of the front facade is divided into three commercial spaces with two separate entrances and large, plate glass windows.

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The main entrance to the hotel is set within a recessed corner porch supported by modified Doric columns. Double entry doors to the lobby are oak with clear, leaded, beveled glass lights, sidelights and transom. The 1908 lobby is spectacular, with high quality oak woodwork, a multi-colored tile floor, and large, round-headed arched windows. The design of the lobby has also been attributed to Brynjulf Rivenes due to the quality of the curvilinear, leaded glass designs and the classical motifs incorporated in the woodwork, both common attributes of Rivenes' work. The stained glass in the arched transoms of the lobby dates to the 1970's.

The exterior of the building remains in a remarkable state of preservation. Massing and most details remain intact from 1898 and 1908. The interior of the Olive Hotel underwent extensive remodeling during the 1970's. Blocking in the transom windows on the first and second floors reflect the installation of new dropped ceilings in the rooms. Although the floor plan, with double loaded corridors remains basically intact, much of the interior historic fabric has been replaced or covered with new materials, with the notable exception of the oak balustrade running from the lobby to the second floor. The exterior sign, mansard-type canopy, and boxed porch "brackets" also date from the 1970's. A dining room was built within the rear 1908 addition at that time, a number of the street level windows were enclosed, and a new doorway with gable roofed overdoor was added. The recessed side porch along North 5th was shortened, and a new concrete ramp for handicapped access was installed.

Two poured concrete garages are located to the rear of the hotel across the alley, and both structures contribute to the significance of the Olive Hotel. The earlier garage, built in 1908, is a one-story structure with a large opening cut into the facade, which was originally fitted with double wooden, 6-light doors, but now is closed with a modern, overhead, metal door. Brick veneer was applied to the facade of this garage, likely ca. 1920, and a single fixed window was added. The brickwork matches that of the 1908 Olive Hotel additions, and the new facade may have been designed by Rivenes.

The second garage to be built in association with the Olive Hotel is a two-story structure constructed ca. 1912 that was used as an "auto livery" as well as an automobile sales room and a repair shop. A second floor enclosed walkway over the alley connects this garage to the hotel building. This garage also was designed to be faced with a brick veneer. However, the veneer was never applied and the anchor strips still protrude from the south elevation facing the alley. The structure features one-over-one double hung windows set singly or in pairs, and a large garage opening centered at the street level of the facade. With the exception of the enclosure of the two first floor sets of three windows flanking the garage opening, this garage retains virtually complete historic architectural integrity.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally ✓

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1898-1925

Significant Dates

1898, 1908

1912

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Architect: Brynjulf Rivenes

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Olive Hotel is significant for its direct association with the economic and social life of Miles City, Montana, which has served as the primary trade and service center for Eastern Montana ranchers since the 1880's. The hotel was built in 1898-99 to continue Miles City's tradition of being the leading hotel city in the region after the destruction of its famous, 1882 McQueen House as a result of a fire in 1897. The Olive Hotel was first named "The Leighton" by the original owner Joseph Leighton, a Miles City booster of the late 19th century. The hotel came under the control of Leighton's son, Alvin C. Leighton, shortly after the turn of the century and was renamed. The Olive Hotel achieved the status of a landmark in Eastern Montana immediately after its construction, and has since served as the social center and meeting place for area ranchers and travellers. In 1908, when the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway completed its line to the city, a major expansion of the Olive occurred in response to the newly invigorated economy. Commercial enterprises incorporated as part of the 1908 remodelling included a cafe, barber shop, cigar and curio stand, buffet and sample rooms.

The Olive Hotel is also of considerable architectural significance and features one of the most spectacular building fronts in Miles City. The facade of the building dates to the 1908 remodelling, which has been attributed to the locally significant architect Brynjulf Rivenes. This attribution is based in part upon "signature" use of curvilinear, clear, beveled glass designs in the windows of the Main Street entrances, which closely resemble those used by Rivenes in the Milligan House and the Elks Home in Miles City and the Herrick House in Glendive. Hebron brick and the use of alternating one-over-one and Chicago-style tripart windows in the front 1908 portion and the oak panelling and tile floors of the hotel lobby were also characteristic design elements employed by Brynjulf Rivenes. The main lobby and entry details are among the finest in the State.

The two garages built to the rear of the hotel in 1908 and 1912, respectively, are significant reminders of the rising importance of the automobile during the historic period. Used for auto sales, repair and storage,

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Buchanan, A., Seeing Miles City, 1915, pp. 2, 12, and 14.  
Weekly News, Miles City, Montana, May 7, 1898, July 23, 1898.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A 

1	3	4	3	4	6	0	0
Zone				Easting			

5	1	3	9	2	8	0
Northing						

C 

Zone Easting Northing							

B 

Zone				Easting			

Northing							

D 

Zone Easting Northing							

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 21, and 22 of Block 32 of the Original Townsite of Miles City.

SW $\frac{1}{4}$  SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 33 T8N; R47E

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the city lots upon which the Olive Hotel and two associated garages are situated.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title John Goff and Patricia Bick date April 1988  
 organization State Historic Preservation Office telephone (406)444-7715  
 street & number 102 Broadway state Montana zip code 59620  
 city or town Helena

6/20/88

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the garages are good examples of utilitarian, poured concrete, fire-proof construction. The proprietor of the Olive Garage in 1912 was Herman W. Titus, who resided at the hotel.

The period of significance for the Olive Hotel extends from 1898 to 1925. As the commercial fortunes of the eastern Montana community of Miles City were directly affected by the post-World War I agricultural depression, so was the commercial vitality of the Olive Hotel. Whereas the hotel had played a central role in the commercial and social life of the community for over twenty years, by 1925 business began to slow markedly. Thousands of homesteaders that had settled in eastern Montana during the previous decade lost their new farms to foreclosure after a series of years of drought, pestilence and falling grain prices following the First World War. Many of these homesteads were subsumed as part of large cattle ranches, and the Bureau of Land Management reclaimed hundreds of thousands of acres under the Land Utilization Act. As Custer County experienced a decline in population, the Olive Hotel's importance as a social meeting place and stop-over for travelling salesmen also declined.



THE DANBURY HOTEL MILES CITY MONT.



Olive Hotel  
501 Main St. Miles City  
Custer County, Montana  
Photographer: unknown

Location of negative: Ellen Moran, Miles City, MT

Date of photo: ca. 1915

Views: looking northeast at south and west  
elevations

C-1-7

Olive Hotel  
(E. Moran)

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The Olive Garage and Repair Shops.

the advantage of utilizing the water instead of allowing  
their land to lie fallow, more land is being put under

Olive Hotel and Garages C-8-9  
501 Main Street, Miles City  
Custer County, Montana

Photographer: A. Schlicting (copied from A. Buchanan's  
Seeing Miles City)

Date of photo: ca. 1915

View: looking east at 5<sup>th</sup> street side of Olive Hotel  
and auto garages.



Olive Hotel

501 Main St., Miles City

Custer County, Montana

Patricia Bick, photographer

Date: January, 1988

Location of negative: MT SHPO

View: looking northeast at  
south and west elevations



LOUIE'S  
OLIVE DINING ROOM

STEAKS & SEAFOOD

HOTEL

Café

Olive Hotel

501 Main St. Miles City

Puster County, Montana

Patricia Bick, photographer

Date: January 1988

Location of negatives: MT SHPO

View: looking east at west elevation



NO PARKING



Olive Hotel

501 Main St. Miles City

Custer County, Montana

Patricia Bick, photographer

Date: January 1988

Location of negatives: MT SHPO

View: looking east at west

elevations of both auto

garages associated with Olive Hotel.