

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property MOUNTAINEER HOTEL

historic name: _____

other name/site number: _____

2. Location

street & number: 31 East Second Avenue not for publication: N/A
city/town: Williamson vicinity: N/A
state: West Virginia county: Mingo code: 059 zip code: 25661

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 ____ nationally ____ statewide x locally.
(____ See continuation sheet.)

William G. Lanza
Signature of Certifying Official

2/15/97
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of Certifying Official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

____ entered in the National Register
____ 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): _____

Mountaineer Hotel
Name of Property

Mingo Co., West Virginia
County and State

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5. Classification

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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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Hotel

Domestic: Hotel

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & Early 20th Century

Revival: Classical Revival

Foundation Concrete

Walls Brick /Steel Frame

Roof Synthetics

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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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.)

Property is:

- ☐ **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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1925

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Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Meanor & Handloser, Charleston-Huntington, WV

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

17 387260 41070145
Zone Easting Northing

Williamson Quad Map

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Kim A. Valente

Organization: _____ Date: December 10, 1996

Street & Number: 226A Bradford Street Telephone: 304/344-5149

City or Town: Charleston State: WV Zip: 25301

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Mountaineer Hotel
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Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name: Mark H. Mitchell

Street & Number: 31 East Second Street, Suite 410 Phone: 304/235-3902

City or Town: Williamson State: WV Zip: 25661

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications 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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Mountaineer Hotel Mingo Co., West Virginia
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Built in 1925, the Mountaineer Hotel is located within the downtown commercial district of Williamson, Mingo County, West Virginia. It is located on the corner of East Second Avenue and Court Street with the main entrance located on East Second Avenue; the main thoroughfare of the downtown commercial district. The square building hotel stands five stories in height and is one of the tallest commercial structures in downtown Williamson. The hotel is constructed of steel framing and has concrete floors and concrete roof. The exterior is framed with yellow glazed brick. When completed, the hotel was designated as fire proof and was so insured by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company of New York.

The basic form of the building is a two-part commercial block plan. The five stories are emphasized in two sections. The lower section, street level, and mezzanine level, are each accented by a running stringcourse at the cornice line. The cornice line is then accented by bricks lying on angle with points facing out to produce an effect similar to dentils. Above this row is a line of bricks in a running bond. The street level or lobby floor has wide bay openings which contain storefronts housing a beauty salon and barber shop, news stand, Western Union Telegraph Office, gift shop, and various offices throughout the seventy (70) plus years the hotel has been in continuous operation. Both the main and side entry are covered with a large marquee detailed with the hotels' name. At curb side leading into the hotel along the sidewalks are the words "BAGGAGE ONLY" detailed in small white tile against a small maroon tile background.

The second story or mezzanine floor, has the same stringcourse detailing as the ground/street level. The windows here are double-hung sash with 1/1 openings. They are set into the facade with brick sills and lintels. Above the windows are false brick stilted arch detailing accented with a keystone and centered diamond pattern. Adjacent to the windows are decorative brickwork in a horizontal pattern representing a false window. The top three floors have 1/1 double-hung sash windows which are inset into the facade with brick sills and lintels. The roof's cornice line has brick corbeling running the entire way around the building. Below the corbeling is a row of bricks extended slightly from the facade interrupted by bricks in a diamond pattern. The roof floor is stepped down from the junction of the wall by about a foot, and was constructed of concrete. This was done to support a possible sixth story to the hotel.

The interior of the hotel has original open public spaces. Upon entering the large lobby, the crest of the hotel "MH" is inlaid on the flooring. The front desk, with pigeonhole boxes for room keys and teller window are still intact. The wrought iron newel post and banister along with the concrete stairwell leading to the mezzanine is intact and in original condition. French doors leading to the ballroom and French doors opening onto small balconies overlooking the lobby down below are also original. A glass block wall and a glass transom in the ceiling located near the elevator shafts allows natural light to pour into the lobby below.

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Mountaineer Hotel Mingo Co., West Virginia
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Interior stairwells, elevator shafts, hallways and private rooms retain their original dimensions. Many original bathroom fixtures and light fixtures can be found in the hotel rooms on the mezzanine and third floors.

Restoration to some of the interior spaces of the top two stories is in progress. Many of these rooms were remodelled in the 1970s after a fire destroyed many of the rooms. Removal of the 1970s alterations has been effective and some of these rooms retain their original square footage. A face lift of new paint, reconditioned floors and replastering of the lobby and mezzanine ceilings have been conducted over the past eight months.

The overall delineation of public and private space throughout the interior of the hotel is not unlike it was in 1926. The original functions intended for this building have remained intact.

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The Mountaineer Hotel is significant under National Register Criterion A within the areas of Community Planning and Development, and Commerce. Designed by the firm of Meanor and Handloser, of Charleston - Huntington, it is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture.

The City of Williamson, county seat of Mingo County, is located in the "Heart of the Billion Dollar Coal Field". It was incorporated in 1905 by special charter of the WV legislature. Billions of tons of coal flowed in and out to the community on rail, during the first half of the 20th century. The Norfolk and Southern Railroad maintains one of the largest train yards and shops on its system, with more than one hundred miles of track running through the city. Williamson has historically been the service center for the surrounding coal camps and unincorporated areas throughout the county. It is the largest municipality in Mingo County with a population of 4,154 in 1990.

Coal has been mined from the Williamson Coal Field since 1894; the year the Norfolk and Western Railroad (now Norfolk Southern) was completed through the area. In that same year 52,673 tons of bituminous coal was mined. In 1925 the coal field produced over 8,210,228 tons of the "black gold". It is only fair to say that with this much industry, and sudden growth in population, many business and social needs had to be met in the town. One necessity was to provide the workers, travellers and businessmen coming to the area with a place to stay and conduct business. The community also needed a place where activities could be held. The desire to accommodate these needs resulted in the building of the present day Mountaineer Hotel, through the leadership of the city fathers.

In 1923 an executive committee consisting of 25 prominent businessmen throughout the county met to commence the fund-raising for the hotel. This action was backed and sponsored by the Williamson Chamber of Commerce. A stock campaign was initiated with the executive committee acting as the stock salesmen. Twenty-five (25) committees, with ten (10) members each were organized to raise funds of \$300,000 needed for the land purchase, contraction of architects, builders, etc. At the conclusion of the fund-raising efforts \$493,000 was raised. Four lots (approximately 100 square feet) located in the central business district were purchased for \$90,000. The majority of the stocks were sold to the residents of Williamson. By the conclusion of the stock selling efforts, there were 1,400 stockholders in the hotel corporation.

Many people who worked and lived in Williamson had an interest in seeing the project completed. Jobs outside working in the mines would be available. Small businesses in the town could open and expand. The residents would have a place for community functions, private club affairs and be able to accommodate visiting travelers and dignitaries. In June of 1924, a city permit was granted to the committee for construction of the hotel.

The community hotel was built in 1925, and was designed by the architectural firm of Meanor and Handloser, who had offices in Charleston and Huntington, West Virginia. Both Wilbur A. Meanor and Edward Julius Handloser were partners in the prominent architectural firm which built

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many public buildings throughout the state of West Virginia. Projects included other hotels such as the Farr Hotel and Governor Cabell Hotel both in Huntington, and the Pence Springs Hotel, Pence Springs, West Virginia. They are also noted for the design of the Catholic High School in the Charleston Downtown Historic District, and the Chesapeake and Ohio train station in Huntington.

Although not a high style example of their work, the Mountaineer Hotel does show the diversity of design by Meanor and Handloser, and their use of classical elements. A local landmark in the downtown, it is one of the few buildings which has not been extensively altered in the business section, or lost to new construction.

The construction of the hotel was contracted by Payne Construction Company, Ashland, Kentucky. The electrical contract work was done by the Richard and Wayland Electric Company of Roanoke, Virginia. The plumbing contract was by R.H. Holtzworth of Huntington. The final cost of the construction of the hotel has been noted as \$600,000. Because the hotel was built on the principle of a community hotel, the executive committee offered \$100 in prize money to the citizen who picked the best name to suit the hotel. Mountaineer Hotel was the name chosen for the building.

The Mountaineer Hotel, according to the Williamson Chamber of Commerce pamphlet published in 1931, boasted such amenities as "116 rooms with baths, adequate lobbies, ballrooms, private dining rooms and suites. In addition, this hotel has one of the finest restaurants in the state and is the mecca for tourists and the travelling public." The hotel also had electric elevators, laundry service and the main attraction was the glass chandelier which hung in the main ballroom. The list of community events held at this hotel within the ballroom and conference rooms ranged from cotillions and weddings, to political rallies and meetings of the Kiwanis, Lions, and the Woman's Club. Events included homecomings, veterans reunions and the Boy Scout meetings.

Among the notables who lodged and made public appearances at the hotel were: President John F. Kennedy; Jay Rockefeller, as both Governor and Senator; John L. Lewis, UMWA founder; Henry Ford, Ford Motor Company; western movie actor Lash La-Rue; singer Tex Ritter; actress Greer Garson; Charles Osgood, CBS TV-news; as well as many other state politicians, sports legends, etc.

Moving into the second half of the twentieth century, the residents of Williamson noticed a change in the economic makeup of the city. With the advancement of mechanized coal production, jobs and people moved to neighboring McDowell County, across the state line to Kentucky, and other points throughout the state. The overall economy of the town changed.

Although the railroad still maintained its large operation of machine shops and roundhouse, the population of the city and surrounding coal camps dwindled. The need to sustain a community hotel had been greatly reduced.

The Mountaineer Hotel slipped into a pattern like many older hotels did throughout the state during this time. Neighboring cities like Mullins, Welch, Pineville and Logan, West Virginia lost many of their

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hotels to neglect and even demolition, but the Mountaineer Hotel prevailed. From 1965 to 1995, the Mountaineer Hotel managed to stay in business, although not as a thriving hotel of prominent guests and travellers. Community functions began to be held elsewhere. The ballroom was made into small rental office spaces. The lobby saw not travellers but many transients, and many of the private rooms were divided into small sleeping rooms with shared baths.

Today is yet another chapter in the history of this community hotel. In December of 1995, new owners took over the management of the property and began returning the hotel to its original form and function. The ballroom can once again be used for wedding receptions and various special events, with guest rooms for overnight stays for travellers and businessmen throughout the area. Visitors can once again enjoy quality accommodations in the "Heart of the Billion Dollar Coal Field".

The Mountaineer Hotel played a significant role in the historic and cultural development of the city. From the time of its inception the hotel has provided a sense of pride within the community while also hosting various community activities. The hotel commands a prominent position in the downtown commercial center of Williamson. The hotel retains its integrity in regards to materials and design and remains a viable community hotel.

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Bibliography

- CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT OF MINES. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES.
Charleston, WV: 1865-1986, 1916, 1920, 1930.
- West Virginia Geological & Economic Survey, Vol. XIII (A).
CHARACTERISTICS OF MINEABLE COAL OF WV. Morgantown, WV, 1955.
- Dobson, Sone, Valente. WV HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM FOR
MOUNTAINEER HOTEL, WV State Historic Preservation Office, Cultural
Center, Charleston, WV 9/18/90.
- WILLIAMSON DAILY NEWS. Williamson, WV, January 1935, April 1940,
November 1952, December 1975, January 1996.
- Williamson Chamber of Commerce Publication Pamphlet, 1931.
- Map of Williamson, WV: Sanborn Insurance Co., New York, October 1932.
- West Virginia State Gazetteers 1890 - 1930.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Mountaineer Hotel sits on the eastern portion of the city block
bounded by East Second Avenue on the north; Court Street on the east;
Linden Court on the south; and Harvey Street on the west.

Boundary Justification

The Mountaineer Hotel boundary is the current legal boundary for
the property as recorded in Mingo County Deed Book 345, page 289.

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Mountaineer Hotel
31 East Second Avenue
Williamson, West Virginia
Mingo County

Photographer: Kim A. Valente

Date: April 1996

Negatives: Camera In Architecture
 226 A Bradford Street, Charleston, WV 25301

Photo 1 of 7: East Second Avenue and Court Street Facades (North)
 Camera looking southwest

Photo 2 of 7: East Second Avenue entry detail
 Camera looking south

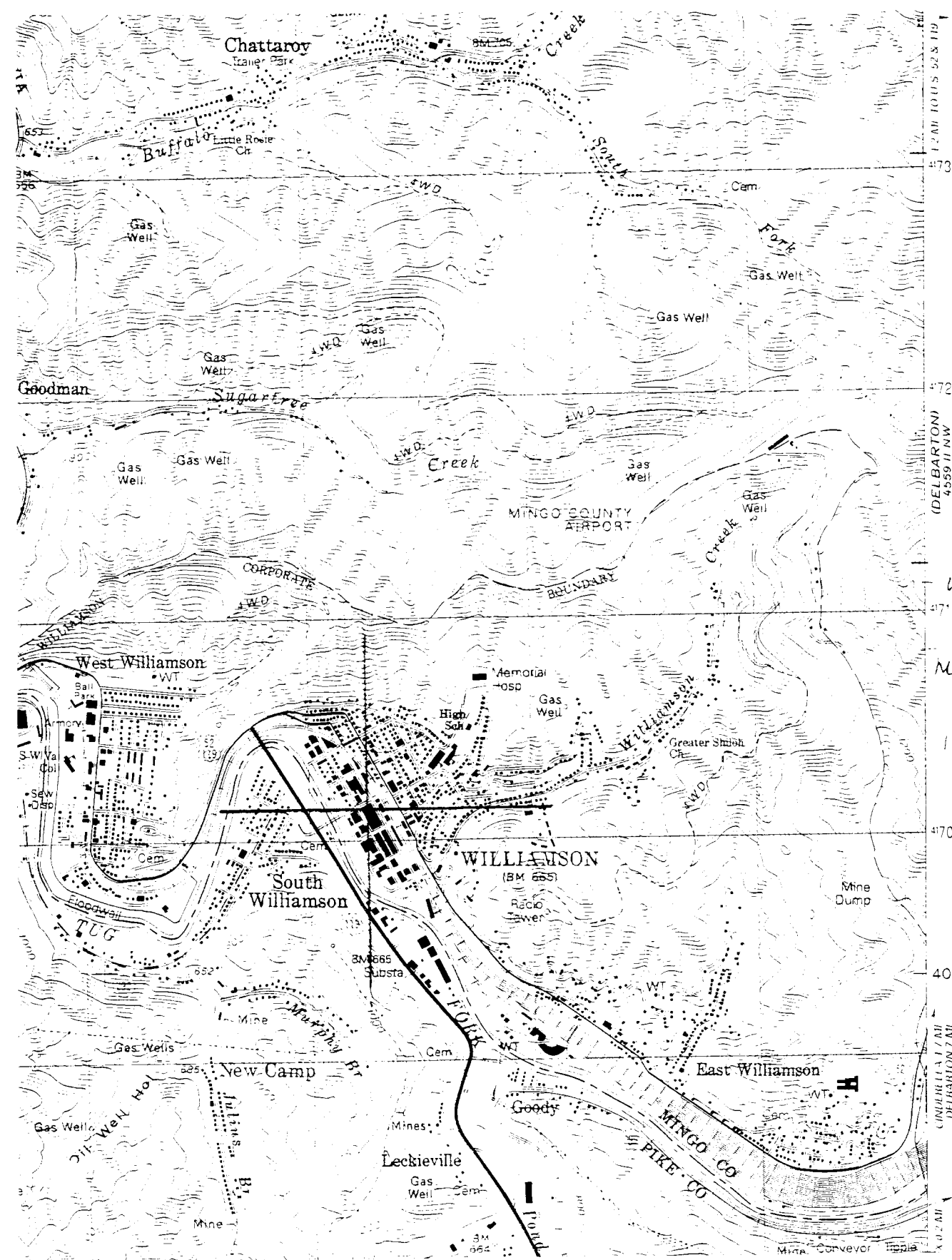
Photo 3 of 7: Window Detail on Court Street
 Camera looking west

Photo 4 of 7: Interior, Lobby floor detail of hotel crest

Photo 5 of 7: Interior, front lobby
 Camera looking southeast

Photo 6 of 7: Interior, mezzanine
 Camera looking southwest

Photo 7 of 7: Interior, public elevator
 Camera looking southwest



WILLIAMSON GUAD

MOUNTAINEER
HOTEL

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