

# MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD

For the Montana National Register of Historic Places Program and State Antiquities Database

Montana State Historic Preservation Office  
Montana Historical Society  
PO Box 201202, 1301 E. Lockey  
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Property Address: **1068 N. Ewing St.**

Historic Address (if applicable):

City/Town: **Helena**

Site Number: **24LC2452**

(An historic district number may also apply.)

County: **Lewis and Clark**

Historic Name: **Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House**

Original Owner(s): **David and Laurel Patterson**

Current Ownership  Private  Public

Current Property Name:

Owner(s): **Smith, Loretta (trustee)**

Owner Address: **1102 SE Spruce Way, Newport, OR,  
97365-4023**

Phone:

Legal Location

PM: **Montana** Township: **10 N** Range: **03 W**

$\frac{1}{4}$   $\frac{1}{4}$  **NE**  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section: **30**

Lot(s): **9 & 10**

Block(s): **39**

Addition: **Central #2** Year of Addition: **1884**

USGS Quad Name: **Helena** Year: **1992**

Historic Use: **Domestic/single family**

Current Use: **Domestic/single family**

Construction Date: **1916**  Estimated  Actual

Original Location  Moved Date Moved:

UTM Reference [www.nris.mt.gov](http://www.nris.mt.gov)

NAD 27 or  NAD 83(preferred)

Zone: **12 T** Easting: **421348.99** Northing: **5160944.65**

Geocode: **05-1888-30-1-08-32-0000**

National Register of Historic Places

NRHP Listing Date:

Historic District:

NRHP Eligible:  Yes  No

Date of this document:

Form Prepared by: **Delia Hagen**

Address: **660 River Court, Missoula, MT 59801**

Daytime Phone: **(406) 360-0120**

MT SHPO USE ONLY

Eligible for NRHP:  yes  no

Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Date: **7/19/2016**

Evaluator: **Kate Hampton**

Comments: Identifying Montana's African American Heritage Places Project.

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## Architectural Description

Property Name: **Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House** Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House Site Number: **Error! Reference**

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### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural Style: **Other:** If Other, specify:

Property Type: **Residential** Specific Property Type: **Single-family dwelling**

Architect: **unknown** Architectural Firm/City/State:

Builder/Contractor: **unknown** Company/City/State:

Source of Information:

*North Ewing runs southwest to northeast. 1068 N. Ewing faces southeast, but for ease of description, the northeast elevation is described as the north, northwest as west, southwest as south and southeast as east.*

The Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House stands at 1068 N. Ewing in Helena, MT. On the north edge of a historic neighborhood, the building is one of three occupied by members of the Harrell family along this block (also 1072 and 1076 N. Ewing). Indeed, the three Harrell family homes remains the only houses on the block through the mid-1950s. Lyndale Avenue, a major thoroughfare, runs east-west along the north side of the block. An alley bisects the block between Ewing and North Warren Street - running parallel to Ewing to the west, and 17<sup>th</sup> Street bounds the block to the south. Set in the centered of the east half of the parcel, the house's setback from the street is in line with most of the other houses in the neighborhood. The grassy lawn surrounds the building, and a historic lilac bush grows near the northeast corner of the building. Another lilac adorns the northwest corner of the house. The back yard is open and grassy, and a modern wood-frame gable-roofed garage, constructed c. 1998, occupies the parcel's northwest corner.

Constructed c. 1916, one-story, wood-frame building features an intersecting-gable roofline, creating a roughly T-shaped footprint. Stucco sheathes the exterior walls, and asphalt shingles cover the roof slopes. The roof displays deep eaves and exposed rafter tails, and an interior chimney protrudes from the west side of the main roof ridge. The residence rests on a concrete wall foundation. An original hipped porch, enclosed with wood-frame screens during the historic period, invites visitors to the house's entrance within the front-gabled bay on the east (front) elevation's north side. A small rear enclosed entry centered in the west elevation was expanded between 1930 and 1951 to envelop nearly all of the west elevation's central bay. Also between 1930 and 1951, the Harrell family added a small shed extension to the west side of the north elevation. Throughout the residence, unless otherwise noted, the windows are original wood-frame, one-over-one double-hungs with aluminum storms.

#### *East (front) elevation*

The east elevation consists of three bays, the side-gable bay to the south, the front-gabled bay to the north, and a small shed-roofed bay that projects farther north from the west end of the north elevation. Fenestration in the south, side-gabled bay consists of a single centered window. A concrete sidewalk leads to the north bay's full-width enclosed porch, and branches south then west, leading to the backyard. The porch extends from the front-gabled wall beneath a hipped slope. A wood-frame screen door permits entry to the porch off-center to the south. Wood-frame screens fill the openings above the porch's stuccoed half-walls: one to the south of the door, a ribbon of three north of the door, one on the east side of the porch's south elevation and one twice as wide as the other single screens across the porch's north elevation. The house's main entry within the porch consists of an original one-light solid wood door set on the bay's south side. A large, original wood-frame fixed-sash, two-light window fills the bay's north side. The small projecting shed-roofed bay that protrudes from the west side of the north elevation contains a single centered window.

#### *North (side) elevation:*

West of the front porch described above, the north elevation contains a single window centered its east side, and a pair of windows at center. The north elevation's west side contains a rectangular, shed-roofed protruding bay. This bay contains no fenestration on its north elevation, and its rafter tails are visible at the roofline. Another shed-roofed bay constitutes the north elevation of a historic addition attached to the north side of the house's west (rear) elevation. Fenestration patterns on this bay were not viewable at the time of survey.

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Architectural Description

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## *South (side) elevation:*

West of the front porch, the south elevation contains four bays: a side-gabled bay to the east, a front-gabled projecting bay at center, another side-gabled bay, and the south elevation of the rear addition. The east three bays each contain a single window. The rear addition's south elevation contains a single pedestrian door sheltered by a knee-braced, wood-frame shed awning. The door opening sports a modern, pressed metal, one-light storm.

## *West (rear) elevation:*

The rear of the house displays four bays: a side-gabled bay to the south, the main front-gabled north bay, the shed-roofed addition attached to the front-gabled bay, and the small shed-roof bay that protrudes from the west end of the building's north elevation. A single centered window punctuates the south bay. Largely obscured by the addition, the main north bay features an original nearly square window opening low in its gable end, now infilled with a single fixed light and plywood. Below, the addition's shed roof slopes down to the west and displays exposed rafter tails. Its west elevation originally held two windows, but the smaller opening to the south has been infilled with plywood. The other, nearly square opening to the north contains a single fixed light. The northernmost small shed bay contains a single window.

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History of Property

Property Name: **Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House** Site Number: **Error! Reference source not found.** 24LC2452

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## HISTORY OF PROPERTY

This property was first platted in 1884 as Lots 9 and 10 of Block 39 of the Central Addition No. 2, along the northwest side of N. Ewing Street, southwest of its intersection with E. Lyndale Avenue. Tax records indicate the current house was built in 1916, and other sources suggest a similar date of construction. At the time, 1068 N. Ewing was owned by Job S. and Anastasia Smith, who had purchased it the previous year from David and Loral Patterson. David Patterson was a carpenter, and may have built the house and its neighbor, 1072 N Ewing, after buying the property on which both houses stood (the north half of lot 9 and all of lots 10 and 11) from Robert and Jennie Hawkins in 1914.<sup>1</sup> City directories first listed the Smiths living at 1068 N Ewing in 1917.<sup>2</sup> That year they rented 1072 N Ewing, which stood on lot 11, to Daniel G. Kuffel.<sup>3</sup>

Job, a confectioner, and Anastasia owned the property for ten years, but apparently lived in the house only briefly. By 1918, 1068 N. Ewing was occupied by the family of Charles Henry Harrell, a 30-year-old African-American man who listed the property as his home address while registering for the draft that year. Harrell worked as a janitor at the Marlow Theater, supporting his 25 year-old wife, Arizona-born Mary Emma (nee Bridgewater) and two young sons, Charles Jr. (3), and Arthur (2).<sup>4</sup> That same year another member of Helena's African-American community, Claude H. Polk, was living next door at 1072 N Ewing, a home he would occupy into the 1920s, at least.

Charles Harrell, a native of Hawkinsville, Pulaski County, Georgia, and his descendants would occupy 1068 N Ewing for most of the 50 years, much of the time as owners: in 1925, Job and Anastasia Smith conveyed the north half of lot 9 and all of lots 10 and 11 to the Harrells. Five years later, the Harrell-owned houses at 1068 and 1072 N Ewing remained the only homes on that block of N Ewing, which was largely undeveloped. By that time, the Harrell family had grown to include another son, Cornelius, born ca. 1920. Charles continued working at the Marlow Theatre—sometimes listed as a janitor and sometimes as a porter—for many years, but by 1941 he'd moved to the First National Bank and Trust, where he worked as a janitor.

As his sons grew they, too, began working to support the household, where they continued to live. By 1941, Arthur was occupied as a student, while Cornelius was working as an elevator operator at the First National Bank and Trust and Charles Jr. was a maintenance man at Morrison Flying Service. Three years later, in the midst of the Second World War, all three sons were still at home but Arthur and Cornelius were in the armed forces (ie. their employer was listed as USA) and Charles Jr. had graduated from maintaining planes to flying them for Morrison Flying Service. The following year, Charles Jr. married 20-year-old Marian Frances Gaston, a native of Sherman, Texas, and the young couple moved into the Harrells' rental at 1072 N Ewing. By 1947, Charles Jr. had been promoted to an instructor at Morrison.

The following year, tragedy struck. On May 30, 1948, Charles Jr. died in a plane crash.<sup>5</sup> His widow and young son remained at 1072 N Ewing for at least several years, with other members of the family on both sides of her: ca. 1949, builders completed a house at 1076 N Ewing that became the home of Arthur Harrell, then a bartender at the Montana Club, and his wife Mary.<sup>6</sup> By 1951, both of the other N. Ewing Harrell houses had been enlarged with north-side

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<sup>1</sup> The Hawkins family acquired it in 1912 from the John B. Atchison family. The Atchisons had owned it since 1888, when they got it from Charles Reynolds and William Smith. Reynolds and Smith acquired the property in 1887 from addition-developers Hauser, Ashby, and Floweree.

<sup>2</sup> In 1916, Job Smith was living at 513 Hillsdale. Research identified no earlier listings for 1068 N. Ewing.

<sup>3</sup> 1072 N Ewing first appeared in city directories in 1916, when it was occupied by Albert H. Paice, an Englishman who worked as a gardener.

<sup>4</sup> In 1916, Charles Harrell lived at 502 Peosta, the home of his wife's parents, and worked as a waiter at the Montana Club.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Jr. received a veteran's headstone, and was enlisted in the Army from 10/16/1943-1/6/1945.

<sup>6</sup> In 1950, Cornelius and his wife Eleanor were living at 121 S. Park. By 1953 Cornelius and his (second?) wife Mildred were living at 913 Cannon, where they remained for many years. During this period, Cornelius worked as a mechanic at Placer Motors. Charles

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History of Property

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bumped-out bays, and 1068 also boasted a new larger front porch. Then, in 1956, death touched the family again, this time taking Charles Sr. His widow, Mary Emma, retained the family home at 1068 N. Ewing for another 20 years, and Harrells remained nearby for even longer: Mary A. Harrell, Arthur's widow, was still living at 1076 N Ewing in 1993, and may have stayed there until she died in 2000.

In 1976, Mary Emma Harrell conveyed lots 9, 10 and 11 to Harold and Theresa Sannes. The Sannes separated the ownership of 1068 and 1072 N Ewing in subsequent years, and in 2008 the estate of Theresa Sannes conveyed lots 9 and 10 (containing only 1068 N Ewing) to Michael Friend. Two years later, the current owner, Loretta Smith, acquired it.

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Jr.'s widow Marian was last listed in city directories in 1950, when she still lived at 1072 N Ewing. Marian's subsequent location, and subsequent occupants of that house, are currently unclear.

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Information Sources/Bibliography

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## INFORMATION SOURCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancestry.com, various military and death records

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1884 Central Addition No. 2

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Statement of Significance

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NRHP Listing Date:

NRHP Eligibility:  Yes  No  Individually  Contributing to Historic District  Noncontributing to Historic District

NRHP Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Area of Significance: **Ethnic Heritage & Social History** Period of Significance: **1918-1966**

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Purchased in 1925 by Charles and Mary Emma Harrell, the Harrell house is significant under NRHP Criterion A (local level) as a residential property associated with the history of African-American people in Helena, MT. Charles Harrell was a black man from Georgia who'd been in Helena for years, and his wife Mary Emma was the daughter of the locally prominent Samuel and Mamie Bridgewater family (her family's home, the Haight-Bridgewater House, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places). The Harrells, who first moved into the home as a rental in 1918, owned and occupied 1068 N. Ewing until 1976, when widowed Mary Emma sold it. The Helena African-American community, which peaked ca. 1910, had by then long been in decline, but several longtime, close-knit extended families endured. The Harrell house is thus associated with the historic context of endurance in the midst of the broader decline of the black community, ca. 1910-1940. The property's period of significance is the period during which it was owned and/or occupied by African-American people, ie. 1918 through 1966 (ie. 50 years ago).

The Harrell house represents these significant historic themes in a number of specific ways. Although black households clustered in several neighborhoods, Helena, like other western cities, did not suffer the strict residential segregation that was common in other regions, and black households could be found in areas across the city, like N. Ewing Street. And like other black families in the region, Harrell family members came to Helena as a result of "colored" troops being stationed at Fort Harrison (Mary Emma's father was one of these soldiers), and the Harrells lived in a close-knit, multigenerational extended family milieu. Harrell men worked as porters, bartenders, janitors etc.—prototypical positions for black men, who in this period were oft-confined by structural racism to low-status, low-waged work. Their stints at the Montana Club, which was the single largest employer of black Helena residents, were likewise representative.

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Integrity

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**INTEGRITY** (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association)

The Charles and Mary Emma Harrell House at 1068 North Ewing retains a very high degree of integrity. The Harrell family lived in the house for the majority of the twentieth century, and it remains unchanged since their tenure. The building stands in its original location. The setting has been impacted slightly by the growth of the neighborhood over the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in particular by the commercialization of nearby Lyndale Avenue, just a half-block to the north. The street remains residential, however, and these changes do not overtly affect the property. Indeed, the two properties north of the house are associated with the Harrell family as well and also retain their ability to convey their historic associations. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship remain intact. Its continuous use as a single family home contributes to its integrity of feeling and association.



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Photographs

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Feature #  
Facing: NW

Description: 1068 N Ewing, south and east elevations

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Photographs

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Feature #  
Facing: SW

Description: 1068 N. Ewing, north elevation

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Photographs

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View to northeast, 1068 N Ewing west elevation

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Site Map

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# MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD

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Topographic Map

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## PROPERTY:

1068 N Ewing St  
Lewis and Clark County  
Helena, Montana

GeoCode:

05-1888-30-1-08-32-0000

LAT 46.597471

LON -112.026832