

Rocky Mountain Laboratories, Building 17
903 South 4th, connected to and east of Building 16
Hamilton
Ravalli County
Montana

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
2N-

**PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Rocky Mountain System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

ROCKY MOUNTAIN LABORATORIES,
Building 17

HABS No. MT-101-N

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
2N-

Location: 903 South 4th Street, connected to and east of Building 16
Hamilton, Ravalli County, Montana
USGS Hamilton South Montana Quadrant,
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates for complex:
A. 11.719000.5124400 B. 11.719000.5124120
C. 11.718810.5124100 D. 11.718820.5124360

Date of Construction: Constructed in 1952

Architects: Unknown

Present Owner: National Institutes of Health

Present Occupant: National Institutes of Health

Present Use: Medical Research Laboratory

Significance: The Rocky Mountain Laboratories possess national significance due to the pioneering research conducted at these laboratories from 1921-1945 toward the development of vaccines for insect-borne diseases. Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever occurred frequently among the residents of the Bitterroot Valley in Montana. The facility was the primary site for research into the cause of the fever and many prominent members of the scientific community have worked at the laboratories. The period of historic significance for the site extends to the end of World War II as the Rocky Mountain Laboratories played a critical role in supplying vaccines to troops for the duration of the War.

The buildings are of a high quality for a small community such as Hamilton, Montana. The majority of the buildings were constructed by the Office of the Supervising Architect, Department of the Treasury under the direction of Louis A. Simon, a long time architect for the Treasury Department. The Laboratory, which sits at the edge of this small town, offered employment to local individuals seeking work in the 1930's during the Depression. For all of the above reasons, the Rocky Mountain Laboratories Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Building 17 is not a contributor to the Historic District.

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Building Seventeen was constructed in 1952 and has for several years been used as an equipment storage facility. This small, rectangular in plan building has a gable roof with the ridge running perpendicular to South 4th Street. Building Seventeen is connected to Building Sixteen via a small passage way on the east side. Several vents and exhaust units are housed in the gable ends. Small exhaust pipes project from the roof. Numerous windows and doors along the north and south sides of the building indicate it perhaps had a previous, different, use. The building has a concrete foundation, is sheathed in horizontal siding and has an overall industrial character.