

Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME					
address:	610 S Peach St Medford, Jackson County		historic name:	Washington Elementary School	
assoc addresses:			current/other names:		
location descr:			block/lot/tax lot:		
			twtnshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:	37S 2W 36	
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS					
resource type:	Building	height (stories):	2.0	total elig resources:	2
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant			total inelig resources:	0
prim constr date:	1931	second date:		NR Status:	Individually Listed
				date indiv listed:	10/31/2012
primary orig use:	School			orig use comments:	
second orig use:					
primary style:	Art Deco			prim style comments:	
secondary style:				sec style comments:	
primary siding:	Stucco			siding comments:	
secondary siding:					
plan type:	School (General)			architect:	Clark, Frank Chamberlain
				builder:	Sig Ash
comments/notes:					
Contributing school bell.					
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS					
Not associated with any surveys or groupings.					
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY					
NR date listed:	10/31/2012	106 Project(s)			Special Assess Project(s):
ILS survey date:		SHPO Case	Date	Agency Effect Eval	None
RLS survey date:	03/26/2010	10-0773	03/26/2010	no adverse effect	Federal Tax Project(s):
					None
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION					
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>					
<p>The Washington Elementary School is a two-story grade school built in 1931 in Medford, the county seat of Jackson County, Oregon. The school is located at 610 South Peach Street in a residential neighborhood in West Medford, a little over one mile southwest of downtown. The Washington Elementary School stands on the southeast corner of a 5.95-acre, two-lot site bounded by S. Peach Street on the east, Dakota Avenue on the south, Hamilton Street on the west and an alley to the north. With the exception of a half-acre parcel comprising the northeast corner of the block the entire acreage is occupied with school-related features, including an athletic track, parking lots, and play areas. The parcel is sprinkled with mature deciduous trees and crisscrossed with concrete walkways. The flat-roofed school building has an asymmetrical U-shaped footprint, with an east-facing primary facade that features two symmetrical formal entrances. The north wing is longer than the south, and includes a historic 1949 addition and two smaller non-historic later additions. The building's flattened classical ornamentation, symmetrical fenestration, continuous parapet, and smooth, stucco surface treatment all reflect an architectural style commonly used for public buildings during the 1920s and 1930s, the Stripped Classical or Classical Moderne. The school's construction in 1931 was a community response to the need for jobs during the Great Depression and the overburdening of school facilities by population growth. The school is the single contributing building on the site, and an 1896 cornerstone and school bell from the original Washington School is the single contributing object. The nominated parcel does not include the entire 5.95-acre property, rather, it includes only the southern 4.11-acre portion of the site.</p>					
HISTORY					
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>					
<p>Washington Elementary School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criterion A, Education. The construction of the school in 1931 was part of what the local newspaper then termed "...the greatest school building program in the history of the city." Completely locally funded and administered, this Depression-era jobs project was undertaken in response to Medford's sudden and rapid growth at the end of the nineteenth century and first third of the twentieth century, which resulted in an acute need for new schools in southwest Medford, the only area in the city without public schools. The program built Washington Elementary and Medford High School (now Central Medford High School), and added classrooms to Roosevelt Elementary. Of the three projects, Washington Elementary is the only building that retains its historic integrity. Roosevelt Elementary was demolished in 2009 and the High School was considerably altered in 2010 to fulfill new functions. In the World War II period, Medford continued to grow with the establishment of the nearby military cantonment Camp White. In the postwar period, lumber mill companies bought former Camp White lands, benefitting from the infrastructure left behind and becoming a major employer and economic force in the region. These jobs attracted more people to the region, and, combined with the effects of the Baby Boom, created the need for a major addition to Washington Elementary in 1949. The period of significance for Washington Elementary begins with the school's construction in 1931 and continues through the major addition made to the building in 1949.</p>					
RESEARCH INFORMATION					
✓ Title Records	✓ Census Records	✓ Property Tax Records	Local Histories		
✓ Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	SHPO Files	Interviews		
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	State Archives	✓ Historic Photographs		
✓ City Directories	✓ Building Permits	State Library			
Local Library:			University Library:		
Historical Society:	Southern Oregon Historical Society		Other Repository:		
Bibliography:					

City of Fort Collins. Planning Department. "In the Hallowed Halls of Learning. The History and Architecture of Poudre School District R-1", Chapter 3, August 2004. City of Medford. Planning Department. Nomination of the Downtown Historic District to the National Register. Section Number 8. "Historic Context". City of Medford. Planning Department. Nomination of the South Oakdale Historic District to the National Register. Section Number 8. "Description". City of Medford. Medford Planning Department. "Medford Oregon: Historic Context 1846-1946." Unpublished document. 1993. Curler, Dawna. "Students + Past = Future," Table Rock Sentinel, November/December (1988): 15-18. Nesheim, Margaret, One Hundred Twenty-Three Years's Search For Community, Medford, Oregon: Gandee Printing Center, 1976). Russell, Jr., Robert D. "Unrealized Visions. Medford and the City Beautiful Movement," Oregon Historical Quarterly 102 (2001): 200. School District #49- 549C (2005). "Historical Data, Medford, Oregon – School District #49 – 549C." Ben Truwe. Southern Oregon History, Revised. "A History of Medford Up to 1932." U. S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. "Oregon. Table 4. - POPULATION OF CITIES OF 10,000 OR MORE FROM EARLIEST CENSUS TO 1950." Newspaper Articles from the Medford Mail Tribune (organized by date) "Over Crowded School Rooms," Medford Mail Tribune, February 23, 1906, 1. "Medford Schools Will Again Overflow," Medford Mail Tribune, July 26, 1907, 5. "Great Increase Local Schools During Year," Medford Mail Tribune, May 21, 1911, 1. "Full Capacity of High School Is Being Used," Medford Mail Tribune, January 27, 1913, 6. "Building Site Acquired for School Needs," Medford Mail Tribune, September 7, 1930, 1. "Be Sure To Vote Tomorrow," Medford Mail Tribune, December 15, 1930. "Great Program For Schools is Close. Two Buildings Erected as Population Increase requires New Facilities," Medford Mail Tribune, January 7, 1931, 10. "Construction of Washington School Starts", Medford Mail Tribune, March 18, 1931, 6. "School Open House To Precede Razing," Medford Daily News, May 28, 1931, 1. "Old Schoolhouse Making Way For New Courthouse," Medford Mail Tribune, June 9, 1931, 8. "Old Washington School Bell Is Given New Role," Medford Mail Tribune, September 2, 1931, 10. "School Children Join Ranks Here in Big Play Fete," Medford Mail Tribune, November 5, 1931, 6. "Many Gather At School For Tree Planting Service," Medford Mail Tribune, February 2, 12, 1932, 9. "New School Readied For Students", Medford Mail Tribune, September 18, 1949, 1. "Reserve Classroom In Use; Attendance Up", Medford Mail Tribune, September 20, 1949, 1. Anonymous, Elder Neighbor of Washington Elementary School. Written communication to Diana Marmon, City of Medford Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission. Winter, 2012. Frazier, Joe. Principal, Washington Elementary. Personal communication to Kathy Helmer, Medford City Planner. Fall, 2011. Truwe, Ben. Medford Historian. Personal communication to Kathy Helmer, Medford City Planner. April 25, 2012, Ben Truwe. "My Southern Oregon History Pages." <http://id.mind.net/~truwe/tina/s.o.history.html>