

Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME			
address:	404 Main St Fossil, Wheeler County	historic name:	Fossil Public School
assoc addresses:		current/other names:	Wheeler County Public School, Fossil Elementary School
location descr:	First and Jay Streets	block/lot/tax lot:	
		twنشp/rng/sect/qtr sect:	
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
resource type:	Building	height (stories):	1.0
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant	total elig resources:	2
prim constr date:	c.1905	NR Status:	Individually Listed
	second date:	date indiv listed:	05/22/2013
primary orig use:	EDUCATION: General	orig use comments:	
second orig use:		prim style comments:	
primary style:	Classical Revival: other	sec style comments:	
secondary style:		siding comments:	
primary siding:	Stucco	architect:	DeYoung & Roald Architects; Charles B. Mill (1949 alterations)
secondary siding:	Concrete Block	builder:	
plan type:	Central Blk w/Proj Bays		
comments/notes:			
8/4/2011 - There is a gym at the same address, it has been individually documented. 7/11/2023 - vinyl windows			
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS			
Survey/Grouping Included In:	Type of Grouping	Date Listed	Date Compiled
2023 Fossil MS RLS	Survey & Inventory Project		2023
Fossil Historic Downtown RLS 2011	Survey & Inventory Project		2011
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY			
NR date listed:	05/22/2013	106 Project(s):	None
ILS survey date:		Special Assess Project(s):	None
RLS survey date:	07/11/2023	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 Fossil Public School is located at 404 Main Street in downtown Fossil, Oregon, near the intersection of First and Jay streets. Fossil is located in north-central Oregon and is the county seat for Wheeler County. The two-story building was constructed in 1924 in the Classical Revival style to serve as a grade school and high school for the city of Fossil and surrounding rural areas. The setting of the school today is very similar to how it would have looked historically, oriented toward the west on a large, double-city block overlooking downtown Fossil. The design of the school features typical elements of the Classical Revival style. The structure is in its original location, the historic site of a school in Fossil, and has not been moved. The fabric of the school building is largely original with only minor alterations to the overall building. There is one associated building on the site, on the northwest corner of the tax lot. The contributing building is a gymnasium that has served the school since its construction in 1936 with funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The Fossil Public School is a grade school today, housing kindergarten through eighth grade.</p>			
HISTORY			
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>			
<p>The Fossil Public School is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the important role it played in the educational development of the rural community from 1924 to the present. The building itself is largely unchanged since its last major renovation in 1949. The Fossil Public School is a part of School District 21 in Wheeler County. The site of the Fossil Public School has been the site of a public school in Fossil since 1882, when the first school was constructed in downtown Fossil. The building has been in continuous use as a school since its construction in 1924. The Fossil Public School is locally significant, and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the significant role the school played in the educational development of the rural community since its construction in 1924. The Fossil Public School was also known as Wheeler County Public School throughout much of its history, as it housed both the grade school and high school. The school is located in downtown Fossil at 404 Main Street, near the intersection of First and Jay streets. The two-story Classical Revival-style school building is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the important role it played in the educational development of this rural community since its construction. The Period of Significance of the Fossil Public School spans from its original construction date of 1924, based on the design by DeYoung and Roald Architects from Portland, Oregon, to 1949 when the Fossil High School was built and ninth through twelfth grades were transferred to the new location, which to a degree altered the way that the building was used. The gymnasium associated with the school is a contributing resource to the site, completed with aid from the Works Progress Administration in 1936, within the Period of Significance for the school. Both the school building and gymnasium retain a high degree of integrity through original design, workmanship, and material features with no alterations to the original location or function.</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:		Other Repository:	Fossil School District
Bibliography:			

Conner, Robert E. "Thomas Benton Hoover House" nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Salem, OR: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 1978. Eagleton, Lois. "English Settlement School" nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Salem, OR: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 2007. Fossil Journal, Fossil, Wheeler County, Oregon. Fussner, F. Smith. Glimpses of Wheeler County's Past: An Early History of North Central Oregon. Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, 1975. Ritz, Richard Ellison. Architects of Oregon. Portland, OR: Lair Hill Publishing, 2002. Shaffer, Cistie. Interview by author. Personal Interview. Fossil High School, July 11, 2012. Steiwer, Jack. Days of Yore... & Then Some More. Fossil: Finding Fossil Publishing Bunch, 1991. Stinchfield, Janet and McLaren. The History of Wheeler County Oregon. Dallas, OR: Taylor Publishing Company, 1983. Wheeler County, Oregon Deeds and Records. Deed of Sale from Maggie J. Brown to School District No. 21, January 5, 1898, Wheeler County, Oregon, Deed Book 6, Page 516 (On File: Wheeler County City Hall, Fossil, Oregon). 1924 Architectural Drawings by DeYoung and Roald Architects, Fossil Public School Collection (Cistie Shaffer). 1949 Architectural Drawings by Architect Charles B. Miller, Fossil Public School Collection (Cistie Shaffer).