

Oregon Historic Site Form

Blowers House
715 12th St
Hood River, Hood River County

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

address: 715 12th St apprx. addr

historic name: Blowers House

Hood River vcnt Hood River County

current/
other names: Gatchel House

Optional Information

assoc addresses:
(former addresses, intersections, etc.)

location descr:
(remote sites)

block nbr: _____ lot nbr: _____ tax lot nbr: _____

township: _____ range: _____ section: _____ 1/4: _____

zip: _____

PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

resource type: Building height (# stories): 2

total # eligible resources: 1 total # ineligible resources: 0

elig. evaluation: eligible/contributing

NR status: _____

primary constr date: 1903 (c.) secondary date: _____ (c.)
(optional--use for major addns)

NR date listed: _____
(indiv listed only; see Grouping for hist dist)

primary orig use: Single Dwelling

orig use comments: _____

secondary orig use: _____

prim style comments: _____

primary style: Foursquare (Gen.)

sec style comments: _____

secondary style: Colonial Revival

siding comments: _____

primary siding: Horizontal Board

secondary siding: _____

architect: C. J. Crandall

plan type: Foursquare (Box)

builder: Cox & Wallen, Ludwig Struck

comments/notes: This house was moved from across the street when the hospital wanted to use the parcel for a parking lot. Moved in the mid-1990s.

GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

survey project name or other grouping name: Hood River Heights Survey & Inventory Project
Hood River Heights ILS

farmstead/cluster name: _____ external site #: _____
(ID# used in city/agency database)

SHPO INFO FOR THIS PROPERTY

NR date listed: _____

ILS survey date: 8/1/2008

RLS survey date: 4/8/2008

Gen File date: _____

106 Project(s)



W façade

ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

(Include expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings, and alterations)

Stylistic Summary

The Blowers house is a good example of the Foursquare style with Colonial Revival elements. Completed 1903, the house displays characteristics of the style in its massing, hipped roof, central dormer, wide boxed eaves and friezeboard, decorative brackets, exterior brick chimney, double-hung wood sash windows, and a full-width front porch. Colonial Revival characteristics include the bay windows and Tuscan porch posts. The Foursquare style with Colonial Revival influences was a popular house style in Oregon from the early 1900s to the 1930s, and fairly common in the 2008 Hood River Heights Historic Survey.

Setting

Located on a lot that slopes down to the north, on the northeast corner of 12th and Prospect streets, the 1903 Foursquare house faces west on 12th Street in a mixed residential/commercial area. Residences are located to the north and east of the property, and a parking lot and the local hospital to the south and west of the property. Perimeter plantings and lawns surround the two-and-a-half story house except for a paved driveway off Prospect Avenue to the east. A mature fir tree stands in the lot's northwest corner and hedges of arbor vitae line the east and south borders.

Physical Description

Designed by a C. J. Crandall of The Dalles, Oregon, and built by contractors Cox & Wallen, the Blowers House has an exterior brick chimney, hip roof with gable dormers, wide overhanging eaves supported by carved modillions, a wide friezeboard, and horizontal wood siding finished with large corner boards. The one-over-one, double-hung wood sash windows are finished with simple wood trim, and projecting sills and lintels. Double bay windows, Tuscan porch posts, and lower and upper front porches add to the stylistic details of the house.

The front (west) façade has a gable attic dormer with paired windows above a second-story bay window and full width porch deck enclosed by a balustrade with short, boxed posts. Four Tuscan columns rest on paneled box bases that support the upper balcony. The lower porch is enclosed with a balustrade that flanks the wooden entrance steps. The front has symmetrical window openings and a central entrance that project slightly from the face of the house. The north façade has a two-story bay on the east end.

The west (rear) façade has a gable attic dormer above the second story. The first story has an enclosed rear porch with three small windows. Paired windows on both side of the tall brick exterior chimney, and a two-story bay window are on the south side façade. A covered porch supported by three Tuscan porch posts is on the southeast corner of the house. A double door opens into the rear porch room. The house has a poured concrete foundation.

Building Permits

Interior remodel-rebuild porches- kitchen- floors (no change in footprint) 7/2002, retaining wall 7/1998, and moved the house in 11/1995. The house was altered somewhat when the house was moved. These alterations include: the original ashlar rock foundation was replaced by a poured concrete foundation; removal of the original Corinthian style posts on ashlar rock support piers; and the balustrade railing was replaced by a higher railing (to meet current building codes). The east façade's upper sun porch (at the northeast corner) windows were removed and covered with siding, and the corbelling was removed from the south side chimney. The side porch ashlar rock post piers were replaced with concrete.

HISTORY

(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period [preferably to the present])

Building History

Amby and Ellen Blowers completed their new house on 12th Street in 1903. Architect C. J. Crandall from The Dalles designed the house for the prominent Hood River couple. A summer 1903 article in the "Hood River News" states, "A.S. Blowers is building in a grove of large oaks in Blower's Addition a splendid house, which he says when completed will cost him \$5,000. The house is 34x42, two stories, with full-size basement and a large attic. The colonial style of architecture prevails. Facing Viola Avenue on the west is a large porch, the roof of which is supported by four massive rock pillars, extending five feet above the floor and capped with iron posts. The steps also are of stone. On the north side of the building is a large chipped-brick chimney ornamented with stone work. There are 14 rooms in the house, every one well-lighted and comfortably arranged. The front entrance opens into a spacious hall, with stairways and a grate or fire place.....The dwelling will be heated throughout by a furnace. The walls are all lined with building paper. The bath room is lined with adamant. Cox & Wallen have the contract for the carpenter work. The finishing work is being done by Ludwig Struck. Bert Heath built the chimneys and did the stone work. C. J. Crandall of The Dalles was the architect."

Occupant History

A. S. and Ellen Blowers built the house in 1903. Amby Silas Blowers was born December 31, 1845 in East Otto, New York. Some of his relatives were early colonists and served in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. At age 17, Amby enlisted in Company A of the 2nd Reg. Minnesota Vol. Calvary and fought in the Civil War, discharged in 1866. On April 18, 1866, Amby married Ellen L. Damon who was born in Bennington, Vermont, on November 19, 1847. During the next two decades, Amby worked in milling and mercantile, serving as County Commissioner for Ottertail County and as Mayor of New York Mills, Minnesota.

Amby and Ellen Blowers settled in Hood River on March 4, 1889. With his son Lawrence N., Amby bought the mercantile business at the corner of First and Oak streets from E. L. Smith. County records indicate that by 1892 Amby owned at least 87 parcels of land in the Hood River area. He platted two residential areas in the city: Blowers First (1899) and Blowers Second Additions (1906). Amby was active in public affairs. He served on the City Council, County Commission, and was mayor of Hood River in 1904, and helped develop the west valley irrigation ditch, built Hood River's first brick building at the southeast corner of Second and Oak streets, and was a member of the R.A.M., G.A.R. and the Free Masons. Amby and Ellen had nine children, eight survived to adulthood. Ellen died April 22, 1908. Amby then moved to Portland where he died four years later.

The house was sold to the Blount family in 1908. Telford Blount owned the house until 1926 when it was sold to an investment company, who

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transferred the property the same year to John Smithson. The Smithsons owned the house until 1946 when the Pattons purchased the property. The Pattons sold the house to the Gatchels who were long-time owners. The Gatchel family owned the property until 1991 when it was sold to Hood River County Memorial Hospital. The hospital gave away the house, wanting the land for an expansion project. In 1995, the house was moved across the street to a vacant lot and restored.

Chain of Title

1903: Owner of record: A. S. Blowers
1908: Purchased by Telford Blount et al, deed recorded 7/10/1908
1926: Purchased by Portland Investment Company, deed recorded 4/8/1926
1926: Purchased by John E. Smithson, deed recorded 4/28/1926
1946: Purchased by Heber and Zelpha Patton, deed recorded 5/4/1946
1948: Purchased by Lois Hand Gatchel, deed recorded 3/19/1948
1991: Owner of record: John F. and Ethel Gatchel
1991: Purchased by Hood River Memorial Hospital, deed recorded 5/17/1991
2002: Owner of record: American General Finance, Inc.
2002: Purchased by Craig and Tracy Jones, deed recorded 3/8/2002, In Assessor File
2004: Purchased by Ted W. and Karen Ostre, deed recorded 8/6/2004, In Assessor File
2008: Sold to a new owner at time of this report.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

(Check all of the basic sources consulted and cite specific important sources)

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|--|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Title Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Census Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Histories |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources | <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obituaries | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Permits | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library | |

Local Library: Hood River County Library University Library: _____

Historical Society: _____ Other Repository: Hood River County Historical Museum

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