

Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME			
address:	902-918 SW Yamhill St Portland, Multnomah County (97205)	historic name:	Masonic Temple
assoc addresses:		current/other names:	Pythian Building; Mildred's Palace
location descr:		block/lot/tax lot:	219 / 1-2 / 5600
		twshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:	1S 1E 3
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
resource type:	Building	height (stories):	5.0
elig evaluation:	eligible/significant	total elig resources:	1
prim constr date:	1907	second date:	1959
		total inelig resources:	
primary orig use:	Meeting Hall	NR Status:	
second orig use:	COMMERCIAL: General	date indiv listed:	
primary style:	Mediterranean Revival	orig use comments:	
secondary style:		prim style comments:	
primary siding:	Brick:Other/Undefined	sec style comments:	
secondary siding:	Cast Stone	siding comments:	
plan type:		architect:	Martin, Richard
		builder:	
comments/notes:			
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS			
Survey/Grouping Included In:	Type of Grouping	Date Listed	Date Compiled
Portland LGBTQ+ Historic Resources 2024 RLS	Survey & Inventory Project		2024
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY			
NR date listed:	N/A	106 Project(s):	None
ILS survey date:		Special Assess Project(s):	None
RLS survey date:	05/25/2023	Federal Tax Project(s):	None
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION			
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>			
902-918 SW Yamhill Street is a five-story Mediterranean Revival building with a concrete foundation. The square plan building is topped with a wood cornice and a brick parapet. The ground level contains aluminum storefront windows with aluminum doors. The upper floor windows are single-hung wood segmental arch, Romanesque arch, and pediment designs. There are two fire escape stairs on the building, one located on SW Yamhill Street and the other located on SW 9th Avenue. The building facade features Corinthian-topped pilasters between the windows of the upper floors with detailed latticework and medallions framing the cornice.			
HISTORY			
<i>(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)</i>			
The Masonic Temple, better known as the Pythian Building, housed numerous LGBTQ+-centered enterprises and events starting in the 1960s. The Pythian Ballroom hosted drag events in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As part of the first National Gay Pride week in June 1971, LGBTQ+ organization Second Foundation of Oregon hosted Portland's first Gay Pride celebration with a dance in the Pythian Ballroom. The Metropolitan Community Church held meetings at the Pythian in the early 1970s, and The Second Foundation's Gay Community Center operated in the building between 1972 and early 1973. Between 1977 and 1979, the Pythian's second floor ballroom became Mildred's Palace, the first disco in Portland for LGBTQ+ youth. Opened by Bill Hicks and Lanny Swerdlow, Mildred's Palace hosted the founding of the first LGBTQ+ youth drag court in Oregon. During this time, the club became a target of police harassment against LGBTQ+ youth. The Masonic Temple is significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of LGBTQ+ history for its association with Portland's first Pride celebration, an early LGBTQ+ youth disco, and other LGBTQ+ events and activities.			
RESEARCH INFORMATION			
<input type="checkbox"/> Title Records <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps <input type="checkbox"/> Obituaries <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories	<input type="checkbox"/> Census Records <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Permits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property Tax Records <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHPO Files <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives <input type="checkbox"/> State Library	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Histories <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interviews <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Photographs
Local Library:		University Library:	University of Oregon Digital
Historical Society:	Oregon Queer History Collective	Other Repository:	Umbrella Project
Bibliography:			
Gay Barchives. "53-Lanny Swerdlow: Portland's Gay Scene; Stampede in LA." Youtube Video, 59:57. October 28, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3gXdAFiIMY . Cook, Tom, and George Painter. "1999 Portland Gay History Walking Tour." Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest. https://www.glapn.org/6045walkingtour.html . Dirk, Jayden. "There is No Place in the City." Queer Youth, the Counterculture, and Portland's Early Gay Rights Movement, 1968-1974." Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest. Last updated 2018. https://www.glapn.org/6067EarlyLGBTQYouth.html . Imperial Sovereign Rose Court of Oregon. "Gay Oregon History." History. https://rosecourt.org/a-brief-history-of-the-imperial-sovereign-rose-court/gay-oregon-history/ . Kohl, David Grant. A Curious and Peculiar People: A History of the Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, Oregon and the Sexual Minority Communities of the Pacific Northwest. Portland, OR: Spirit Press, 2006. Singer, Matthew. "March 18, 1996: Portland's Gay Youth Culture Comes of Age in the Fight to Save Its Only Home..." Willamette Week. Last Updated November 4, 2014. https://www.wweek.com/portland/article-23432-march-18-1996-portlands-gay-youth-culture-comes-of-age-in-the-fight-to-save-its-only-home.html . Ad. Northwest Gay Review. June 1977. Horn, Don. "Mildred's Palace." Youth. The Umbrella Project. https://www.umbrellaprojectoregon.com/mildreds-palace . Horn, Don. "The Pythian Building." Venues. The Umbrella Project. https://www.umbrellaprojectoregon.com/pythian-building . Will, Robin. "Portland's Legendary Youth Clubs, 1977-1998: Mildred's Palace, Metropolis, The City, Rage." Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest. Last Updated August 19, 2018. https://www.glapn.org/6058CityNightclub.html . Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest. "Rosebud & Thorn." Queer Heroes Northwest. https://www.glapn.org/6533RosebudThorn.html .			