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C O U R I E R



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Oregon's Department of Transportation Building (1951)

Modernism in the Public Sphere

by Ian Johnson, Historian & National Register Coordinator

Editor's note: This is the final installment of Johnson's three-part series on post-war architecture. His two other articles appear in [Courier No. 1 - 2009](#) & [Courier No. 2 - 2009](#).

Between 1945 and the early 1970s, the role of local and federal government in everyday lives of Americans increased greatly to offer new services while expanding others. During this period new facilities, often designed by locally and nationally well-known architects, were constructed in a variety of styles, including international, new formalism, brutalism, and Expressionism.

In many cases these designs were no less grand or architecturally daring than those of prior generations. Buildings of this period had little ornamentation, and emphasized strong geometric shapes and the use of modern materials such as glass, metal, and concrete. The public spaces constructed during this period reflect the optimism and aesthetic of this era, and are representative of the historic growth in government services during the period.

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Weatherizing Windows of Historic Houses: A Common Sense Approach

by David Bogan, Editor, Cultural Heritage Courier

From the ever increasing blitz of ads on radio and television, not to mention those popping up all over the web, you'd find it difficult not to conclude that old windows are "public enemy No. 1" in energy wastefulness during the winter. There are also promotions for tax incentives that encourage homeowners to tear out those so called "obsolete" windows and install new and exciting 21st-century products. But in most cases, the new window-equals-energy-savings promise is an empty one; it might be better described as spending dollars to save pennies.

For example, a \$60 storm window installed over an existing 3' x 5' single pane window would mean an energy payback of \$13.20/window each year, assuming gas heat at a cost of \$1.09/therm; it would take only 4.5 years to recoup that investment. Compare this savings with that of replacing the same existing window with a \$550 "low-e" double pane thermal window. This results in \$16.10/window saved each year, again measured in Btu's. So far, so good. But do the math and you'll see that it would take about 34 years to break even on such a cost outlay. [Source: "Embracing Energy Efficiency," *Old House Journal*, Sep.-Oct. 2007]

Hopefully, legislation that President Obama is urging Congress to move forward on—dubbed "Cash for Caulkers" and "Home Star"—would enact elements of the Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance (REEP) legislation that was introduced by Representative Peter Welch (D-VT) and endorsed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation earlier this year.

So, let's step away from these offending, wasteful windows for just a moment to consider that maybe we're being asked to focus on discarding the wrong thing. Think about curtailing waste from another perspective. Shouldn't we fix and save those historic windows? It's an approach that in many cases can help generate income for communities that see the value—both monetary *and* intrinsic—inherent in employing repair and rehabilitation guidelines for historic buildings, both residential and commercial, for the express purpose of attracting the growing number of authenticity-seeking heritage tourists who visit Oregon annually.

And there's another side of the coin in terms of generating income for communities. What about the loss of jobs for professional craftspeople who employ historic preservation's best practices?

Oregon's current high unemployment among construction workers could be offset to some degree in communities across the state if often misguided notions about getting rid of older windows could instead be replaced by an emphasis on hiring preservation-experienced contractors and consultants. More specialists in this field will soon be emerging from the new two-year program in the preservation trades at Clatsop Community College in Astoria. Graduates of such training programs not only can begin earning good money in their new specialty, they can also serve as ambassadors in their communities



Is the replacement of windows in historic houses with new "energy efficient" windows really a viable option?

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MODERNISM IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE . . . continued from page 1

Like the rest of the nation, Oregon's economy and population expanded steadily from the close of WWII through 1975. Between 1940 and the end of the era, the state's population almost doubled to 2.1 million, and growth was especially rapid in the Willamette Valley. In response, the size of state and local government grew dramatically offering an increasing number of services for a growing number of Oregonians.

As the state capitol and county seat, perhaps no other city in Oregon experienced the expansion of government as intensely or retains such an intact architectural record of public architecture as Salem.



Marion County Courthouse (1954)

Located north of the capitol building, the Department of Transportation Building (cover page) was completed in 1951 during the height of federal and state highway construction. Designed by Portland Architectural firm Whitehouse, Church, Newberry & Roehr Architects, the "stripped classical" -style building was designed to compliment the State Capitol Building and Library. The five-story symmetrical, smooth, and minimally decorated white Vermont marble main façade sits on a dark granite base and is punctuated by the regular placement of dark bronze-frame windows and doors, presenting an imposing mass that is broken only by three carved panels above the main entry depicting transportation-related themes.

Constructed in 1954, the Marion County Courthouse (above) replaced the 1873 Second Empire-style seat located at the same site, providing a modern and more spacious location for county business. The courthouse has a symmetrical façade geometrically divided by raised panels, and exhibits aspects of the international style, including a box-like shape, expansive windows, smooth Vermont marble walls and a main volume partially supported by unadorned square columns. Designed by recognized master architect Pietro Belluschi, the courthouse is representative of his later work, such as the former First National Bank in downtown Salem. The noted landscape firm Lord-Schryver designed the grounds for the courthouse.



Salem City Hall (1972)

Salem's Civic Center includes the city hall, main public library, and a fire station set in a well-planned park-like setting. The massive complex was completed in 1972 in an effort to centralize the previously scattered city offices into a single location. The Brutalist design presents all the hallmarks of the style, characterized by a "weighty massiveness," rough-surface concrete exterior, large unbroken wall surfaces, and deeply recessed windows. Sitting at the center of the site, the rectangular Salem City Hall (left) features a stepped parking structure with rooftop plaza and an interior multi-story covered courtyard. The Council Chambers sits forward of the main mass on concrete columns and is connected to the rest of the building by elevated walkways.

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"Main Street" in Oregon's Communities

by Sheri Stuart, Oregon Main Street Coordinator

Reinvigorating traditional business districts often takes the sustained, collective effort of a broad spectrum of community members. Just as economic decline doesn't occur overnight, so too does the vibrant return a historic commercial district take time. And that's where the [Oregon Main Street program](#) comes into play.

Main Street assists communities in developing comprehensive, incremental revitalization strategies built on a community's unique character and heritage. Services are based on the successful Main Street Approach™ developed by the National Trust Main Street Center and include training, technical assistance, and grants.



Salem's Historic Downtown Historic District

Gary Van Huffel, coordinator of the program from 2008 to July 2009, saw great interest from numerous Oregon communities in revitalizing their downtowns during this current economic recession, increased self-reliance, renewed awareness of local heritage and dedicated volunteers.

Oregon Main Street is jointly housed with Oregon Business Development Department and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

"The Main Street program meshes very well with many of our programs here at the SHPO," notes Deputy SHPO Roger Roper. "Cities with downtown historic districts are usually the most successful Main Street communities because they have a distinctive, marketable identity, plus there are more financial incentives for fixing up historic buildings."

Oregon Main Street provides assistance to all communities whether they are just beginning to explore options for their downtown or seeking national recognition as an accredited Main Street™ town. Currently, there are 63 communities* throughout the state participating in one of the three levels of Oregon Main Street:

- **Performing Main Street** is for communities who were previously certified National Main Street cities and for communities with advanced downtown programs following the Main Street Approach™.
- **Transforming Downtown** is for communities who are committed to downtown revitalization using the Main Street Approach™ but need technical assistance to take them to the next level.
- **Exploring Downtown** is for communities demonstrating an interest in revitalizing their downtown and that want to learn more about the Main Street Approach™.

*[*See list on page 11.](#)*

Carved Bone Discovery Develops into an Intriguing Mystery

by Dennis Griffin, State Archaeologist

Editor's note: Read Griffin's first article regarding this mysterious bone in [Courier No. 2 - 2009](#).

The sacrum in humans and other mammals is the bone located at the base of the spine, whose etymology means 'sacred bone,' so called because this bone taken from animal skeletons was apparently offered in ritual sacrifices of past cultures.

Red garnets are gem stones that have attracted human use for at least 5,000 years and whose name was derived from pomegranates due to their resemblance to pomegranate seeds.

Now, what could these two objects possibly have in common?

Here at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), we are still hoping to discover just that. The large carved sacrum with a garnet "eye" (above right) found on an Oregon beach back in March 2009 remains a mystery, but not through lack of trying. Many scientists have been consulted and studies are ongoing to determine the history and antiquity of this unusual carved bone.

In the first place, discovery of a carved sacrum is a very rare occurrence. Only one such example has ever been reported and this example, found north of Mexico City in 1870, depicts the head of an animal carved from an extinct camelid (related to modern camels) that is at least 3,800 years old (below left).

The antiquity of Oregon's sacrum still remains in question with current efforts focusing on determining the type of animal the sacrum is from and the age of the figure's construction.

Regarding the origin of the sacrum, we know more of what animal it is not from than the animal to which it actually belonged. Scientists from Oregon State University, University of Oregon, Washington State University, University of Alaska

Anchorage, University of California Santa Cruz, and the National Park Service have all examined photographs of the sacrum and we know, due to its large size and distinctive shape, it is not from a whale, walrus, sea lion, seal, black or brown bear, elephant, or human. The bone does not resemble that of an extinct mammoth, sloth, camelid, or short-faced bear.

Whether the bone is from a terrestrial or marine mammal is the next issue that has to be resolved and through the efforts of Dr. Loren Davis, an archaeology professor at Oregon State University (OSU) and other scientists at OSU's Stable Isotope Research Unit, a very small piece of the bone will be examined under a mass spectrometer.

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CARVED BONE DISCOVERY DEVELOPS INTO AN INTRIGUING MYSTERY . . . continued from page 5

From this test we will learn in what direction we should be focusing our primary identification efforts, although linking the bone to a particular species may eventually need to rely on DNA analysis.

It would be much easier, albeit to some degree destructive, to discover the age of the bone through Carbon 14 analysis, a process that may eventually be done. However, such an age determination would yield the age of the bone but not necessarily when it was modified into the animal-like face with garnet eyes. To obtain this information scientists are now working to source the adhesive material that was used to attach the garnet to the sacrum.

OSU scientists have examined the matrix around the gem and discovered that the adhesive is from an organic source which points to the use of tree resin, hide or fish glue rather than modern day chemically-based adhesives like Gorilla Glue or epoxy.

A small piece of the glue holding the garnet in place is now undergoing a micro spectroscopy analysis by Dr. Karlis Muchlenbachs from the University of Alberta. Once determined, if sufficient organic material remains, an effort will be made to date this glue highlighting the period of the figure's construction. Efforts are also continuing to source the area the garnet originated from with comparisons of the sacrum's gemstone "eye" being made with garnets from eastern Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and international sources.

Oh, by the way, some people have even suggested that the large bone could possibly be from another mysterious and mythical creature said to still roam deep in the forests of the Pacific Northwest. Could it be from an old Sasquatch?

A Quiet Year for Oregon Coast Shipwreck Discoveries

by Dennis Griffin, State Archaeologist

Following the strong storms and wave action along Oregon's beaches in 2008—resulting in the discovery of many historic shipwrecks and two cannons believed to have come from the 1846 wreck of the USS Shark—the shifting sands of time during 2009 did not uncover other such ship remains.

Absent as of mid-December 2009 were the strong winter tidal surges of the past year that had been pulling sands from the shoreline, carrying them into deeper waters and exposing the long-buried remains of sunken ships. This year our beaches have been able to hold on to their sand, and the earlier noted wreck sites have been partially covered by accumulation of additional sands, thus protecting the many buried wrecks that are known to have occurred along Oregon's shoreline over the past 3,000 years.



Above: Olsen shipwreck site in late November of 2009

Left: Olsen shipwreck in spring of 2008

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Archaeological Site Steward Opportunity

An Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) archaeological site steward opportunity is available on the southern Oregon coast in the Bullards Beach, Cape Blanco and Harris Beach Management Units.

Anyone who has a serious interest in the preservation of archaeological sites and agrees to abide by the applicable Oregon Revised Statutes and the site steward code of ethics, can pass a background check and has never knowingly or willingly violated state or federal archaeological protection laws is encouraged to apply.

OPRD will provide the required Basic Site Steward Training; however, the training requirement can be waived by the State Parks archaeologist if the candidate has proven and sufficient field experience in legitimate archaeology or for a candidate with physical limitations that will restrict their site steward participation to administrative or other non-field duties.

The position's responsibilities include monitoring pre-contact and historic archaeological sites, discretely recording their condition and reporting any evidence of looting, vandalism, erosion, excessive foot traffic or other intentional or inadvertent damage. Site stewards will follow a code of ethics, which includes securing and not sharing confidential information outside of specified contacts designated in the program regarding the location of archaeological sites and associated artifacts and features as well as non-collection surface investigation procedures for any artifacts and/or human remains that may be located during site steward activities.

For more information, contact Nancy Nelson, Oregon State Parks archaeologist, at 503-986-0578 or by emailing Nancy.Nelson@state.or.us

WEATHERIZING WINDOWS OF HISTORIC HOUSES . . . continued from page 2

demonstrating to homeowners and contractors alike the environmental advantages of repairing rather than replacing older windows.

Additionally, while not the solution for all windows, there are an array of relatively inexpensive and Do-It-Yourself methods that all of us can tackle for dramatically increasing energy efficiency of existing windows while maintaining the character of our historic houses.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation reminds us that “preservationists have valuable knowledge and experience to bring to the table. (They) know how to appropriately rehabilitate and retrofit buildings in ways that can conserve energy, create jobs, and save tax dollars.”

Here are two great websites to check out for helpful weatherization strategies for historic property owners that will answer many questions: The National Trust's <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/weatherization/> and the National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/weather/index.html>

The State Historic Preservation Office's restoration and rehab specialist Joy Sears can address all kinds of weatherization inquiries. Sears can be reached at (503) 986-0688 or by emailing Joy.Sears@state.or.us. She has conducted several “Historic Homes and Energy Efficiency” workshops over the past six months and if your community is interested in this workshop, don't hesitate to contact her for more information and scheduling.

OPRD's Preservation Engineering & Design Specialist (Preservation Architect) Sue Licht is providing oversight and guidance on a number of State Parks preservation-related projects including:

- Yaquina Bay Lighthouse – New wood shingle roof, wood gutters and touchup paint.
- Vista House – West balcony stair leak repair.
- Silver Falls – Hemlock Cabin #6 repairs from tree damage.
- Cape Blanco Lighthouse at Cape Blanco SP – Paint lighthouse.
- Coquille River Lighthouse at Bullards Beach SP – Window replication and installation.
- Heceta Head Lighthouse – 1.4 million dollar ODOT Transportation Enhancement grant for complete restoration.
- Arizona Beach State Park – Assessment and preservation plan for the Milking Parlor.
- Sumpter Dredge – Weather envelope project design and construction.
- Pete French Round Barn – Wood shingle roof replacement project.
- French Glen Hotel – Foundation repair project.

Historic Preservation in State Parks

by Ross Curtis, Oregon State Parks Historic Preservation Specialist

In 2009, Oregon State Parks was involved in a number of preservation projects including completing an on-going effort to inventory all above-ground historic resources in the parks.

Currently, 227 historic buildings have been identified within the state parks system as well as many other historic landscape features. The inventory is being prioritized to help the agency better manage these buildings, and allocate funding for repair and maintenance.

A recent addition to the statewide inventory is the Arnold-Park Log House at Tryon Creek State Park (pictured below), which was built in a unique Arts and Crafts style between 1907 and 1917. Nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, the building was recommended as eligible by the State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation this past October; the nomination will soon be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register for final review.

This past summer Oregon State Parks was one of the hosts for the University of Oregon's annual Pacific Northwest Preservation Field School. One project focused on the windows of the historic Poultry Building at the State Fairgrounds in Salem while another saw work at the Silver Creek Youth Camp at Silver Falls State Park where field school



participants worked on stone wall rebuilding, window repair and log building rehabilitation. Additional work by the field school was conducted at the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Gordon House in Silverton.

Preservation related projects during 2009 included revision of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's cultural resource policy, and the initial development of a historic building maintenance training program, which is designed for State Parks field staff who will eventually be creating maintenance plans for the historic resources in their parks.

Changes Ahead for National Register Submissions

by Cara Kaser, Survey and National Register Coordinator

Some standards for National Register submissions in Oregon will be changing over the next year, including a new nomination form and revised policy for photographs. The National Park Service (NPS) recently released a new form for National Register nominations that the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has already started to use.

The new form is similar to the form currently used by the SHPO but with some changes to how Sections 7 through 10 are formatted. Nominations completed on old nomination forms will still be accepted for part of 2010, but preparers should begin using the new forms for all new submissions. Changes to documentation standards for National Register nominations will also be changing slightly over 2010-2011. The SHPO will let preparers know more about these changes when they become available.

A revised policy for photographs has also been released by NPS. The new photo standards are very similar to the 2005 photo standards except that the new standards allow Fuji Crystal Archive photo paper, which will be a considerable cost-savings for nomination preparers.

Photographs that meet the old 2005 photo standards will still be acceptable, but the SHPO encourages preparers to adopt the updated standards for all new nomination submissions. These standards will also apply to any non-HABS/HAER documentation to mitigate adverse impacts to historic resources under the Section 106 and ORS 358.653 processes. The higher standards for HABS/HAER photography will remain unchanged.

The new nomination forms and a checklist to guide preparers through the new photo process are available at www.oregonheritage.org on the "National Register" page. Please contact the SHPO National Register program with any questions or comments at (503) 986-0690.

Special Assessment of Historic Property Tax Benefit Undergoes Modification

by Susan Haylock, Special Assessment Coordinator

The nation's first state tax incentive for the rehabilitation of historic property is heading into its 35th year of existence. A reauthorization bill successfully went through the 2009 legislative session, which extends the Oregon program into the year 2020. The bill also contained the following changes to the program:

- The benefit period has been reduced from 15 years to 10 years.
- The application fee has been reduced from 1/3 of 1% of the Real Market Value of the property to 1/10 of 1% of the assessed value of the property.
- Owners will no longer have to pay for the required historic plaque. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will supply those at no cost to property owners.
- The annual open house requirement has been eliminated.

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SPECIAL ASSESSMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTY . . . continued from page 9

- Exterior rehabilitation/preservation will now be the primary focus of the program.
- Owners will be required to carry property insurance.
- Owners will be required to invest 10% of the structure's real market value on rehabilitation projects within the first 5 years of the benefit period.
- Owners will no longer be subject to a two-tiered project design review requirement. Rather than both being involved, either the SHPO or the local government will perform project reviews.

Although application numbers have been down for the past few years, the program is still considered a vital component in the preservation of Oregon's historic built environment, as well as a component of economic development.

For complete details on the program, go to www.oregonheritage.org and look for the "Special Assessment" web page link under Quick Links.

MODERNISM IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE . . . continued from page 3

While not as ornate as earlier public buildings, these three examples of state, county, and local government are no less important for their association with the growth of government after WWII than that of their distinct architectural aesthetic. There are already four designs listed in the National Register by Whitehouse, Church, Newberry & Roehr, the architects of the State Transportation Building. Recently the building was determined individually eligible for listing by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Some of Oregon's most celebrated architectural statements were created by Pietro Belluschi whose career spanned many decades. Further inquiry may find that the Marion County Courthouse merits recognition as one of his works. Salem's Civic center is only 37 years old and has not been fully evaluated, but the building's distinctive architecture and its association with Salem's growth may be historically significant and is certainly worth further study.

The public buildings cited here are merely representative of the many publically-owned and potentially National Register-eligible buildings found throughout the state. As of yet few have been formally recognized, but there is no doubt that others will be so designated in the future.

For more background on the buildings featured in this article as well as the era of post-war public buildings in the U.S., check out the following web links:

http://www.salemhistory.net/places/civic_center.htm

http://www.salemhistory.net/places/marion_county_courthouse.htm

<http://www.nbm.org/about-us/publications-news/blueprints/federal-modern.html>

A QUIET YEAR FOR OREGON COAST SHIPWRECK DISCOVERIES . . . continued from page 6

While this year's weather has remained stable, increased efforts continue here at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to expand the database of known shipwreck sites so that such sites can be protected from future development, and more easily identified and linked to the proper historic wreck when found exposed along the beach.

SHPO's recent consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) has added several new wreck sites along the lower Columbia River through the use of side-scan sonar and sub-bottom profilers. We hope to continue these efforts with NOAA and the U.S. Coast Guard in the future. The decision to build a new NOAA base in Newport should only enhance the opportunities for sharing data among these agencies.

In the meantime, conservation efforts on the two cannon discovered off Arch Cape in February 2008 continue. As reported in [Courier No. 1 - 2009 & No. 2 - 2009](#), the cannon were delivered to the Conservation Research lab at Texas A&M University in April 2009. Conservation specialists at the lab have been preparing the cannon for the long-term work of removing concretions from the cannon before they can be returned to Oregon for curation. Initial efforts have resulted in the creation of a 3-D image of one of the cannon that will be used to construct a life-sized model hopefully to be displayed along side the two cannon after they have completed the conservation process to show a before and after comparison.

"MAIN STREET" IN OREGON'S COMMUNITIES . . . continued from page 4

Oregon Main Street Tier System Network List

Performing Main Street

Albany, Baker City, Corvallis, McMinnville, Oregon City, Roseburg, and Salem

Transforming Downtown

Bandon, Carlton, Dayton, Hillsboro, Klamath Falls, La Grande, Medford, NNEBA, Oakridge, Philomath, Riddle, Sandy, St. Johns, Toledo

Exploring Downtown

Amity, Aumsville, Bonanza, Canyonville, Condon, Coos Bay, Cottage Grove, Damascus, Enterprise, Estacada, Gladstone, Grass Valley, Gresham, Independence, Irrigon, Junction City, Lake Grove, Lake Oswego, Lakeview, Lebanon, Lowell, Milwaukie, Mitchell, Molalla, Monmouth, Mosier, Myrtle Creek, Newberg, North Bend, Nyssa, Pendleton, Pilot Rock, Port Orford, Reedsport, Sherwood, Silverton, The Dalles, Turner, Vernonia, West Linn, and Yoncalla

2009 Heritage Programs' Grants Awarded

Here's a link to view the [2009 award amounts for recipient projects](#) for "Preserving Oregon," Historic Cemetery, Heritage, and Certified Local Government (CLG) grants. Not included are Museum Grants, which will soon be added to this list as soon as the award recipients are announced.