

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Ashland Masonic Lodge Building

other names/site number Masonic Hall #23 A.F. and A.M.

2. Location

street & number 25 North Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Ashland N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Jackson code 029 zip code 97520

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hancock April 25, 1992
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Helene Byers **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 6/4/92

Ashland Masonic Lodge Building
Name of Property

Jackson, Oregon
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Fraternal meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Fraternal meeting hall

COMMERCE: Specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Georgian

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco, flagstone

roof asphalt, built-up

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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The Ashland Masonic Lodge Building was constructed in 1879 for Ashland Lodge No. 23, A.F., & A.M. Remodelled twice, first in 1909, and again in 1928, the structure stands on Ashland's Plaza--in a row of buildings which comprises the core of the city's early commercial district. The three-story building expresses the historic sense of two distinct periods. The general lodge room, created in 1909, has distinct classical architectural details, and has strong associations with the years between 1908 and 1912, a period of rapid expansion and great prosperity in Ashland. The upper facade is the result of 1928 remodeling in the 20th century Georgian period style. The Masonic Lodge Building is locally significant for its associations with patterns of Ashland's social development after World War I. The building retains its integrity of location, setting, design, and feeling. Despite some alteration to materials on the lower facade, the greatest portion of the building substantially exhibits the building's aspects required to understand its significance and to convey its historic associations.

Located in Township 39 South, Range One East, W.M., Section 9, Tax Lot 7900 (Assessor's Plat 39 1E 9BB), the Ashland Masonic Lodge Building is oriented in an easterly direction on North Main Street, on the west side of the Plaza. Situated toward the southerly end of a row of 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings, the structure is flanked on the south by the former Bank of Ashland (1884) and on the north by the former Ashland Improvement Company Building, (1904). Ashland City Hall stands east of the Masonic building, across the Plaza, and the entrance to Lithia Park lies a short distance to the south. Ashland Creek courses in a south to north direction approximately 100 feet west of the Masonic Building.

Originally constructed as a two-story vernacular brick building with Italianate details, the Ashland Masonic Lodge Building was comprised of commercial spaces on the ground floor and Masonic

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lodge hall facilities on the second floor. Access to lower stores was from North Main Street and the entrance to the second story lodge complex was from a central stairwell shared in common with the Ashland Improvement Company Building. The Ashland Post Office occupied a sizeable portion of the ground floor from 1890 to 1954. Other businesses, including attorneys' offices, a confectionery and the Plaza Cafe occupied additional commercial spaces through the years. The building presently has two primary components, a three-story high central block, comprised of the original 1879 two-story brick block, a third brick story constructed in 1928 and a two-story rear section of reinforced concrete, erected in 1909. A small one-story concrete block addition is located on the west elevation of the building.

The second floor general lodge room, designed in 1909 by Rogue Valley architect Frank Chamberlain Clark, was constructed to accommodate increasing lodge membership during the years 1908 to 1912, a time of intense growth and general prosperity in Ashland. A third story addition and resultant exterior facade, which architect Clark designed in 1928 reflects the classical detailing of the primary lodge room. Decorative elements of 20th century Georgian architecture evident on the building include an entablature, bilateral symmetry, pilastered columns with Corinthian capitals, and round-arched secondary openings with fanlights.

The foundation of the rectangular-shaped building is composed of stone and brick in the front portion, and of concrete in the two-story section. The building measures approximately 45 feet in width and 98 feet in depth on the ground floor. The one story concrete block addition measures 18 by 32 feet in size. A basement, approximately 30 x 45 feet, lies beneath the two-story portion of the building. (The original building measured approximately 45 x 60 feet.) The three-story high portion of the building has a flat, slightly sloping roof with composition covering and the two-story annex has a combined hipped and flat roof, which is covered in metal and composition roofing.

The east elevation and facade of the masonry frame building is symmetrically arranged with seven window bays containing straight-topped, double hung windows on the second and third stories. The upper level outer window bays are flanked by Georgian fanlight windows. The 1879 two-story brick facade and the 1928 third story brick addition have a stuccoed surface.

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The lower storefronts, originally recessed behind a brick wall with seven semi-circularly topped arched openings, were remodelled in 1913. The arched openings were replaced with plate windows and a wide transom. The lower portion of the first story was further changed in 1959 after a severe fire. (1) The plate windows and entry were retained on the northern side of the building, but the transom was covered and the windows filled with glass brick on the southerly half of the lower facade. Flagstone was added at the bottom as a base for the windows. An entry was shifted from the northerly end of the south half of the facade to the southerly end of the building.

The south and north elevations of the building join other commercial buildings. The west and rear elevation remains unpainted and is comprised of the brick parapet wall of the third story, and the reinforced concrete walls of the two story rear portion as well as the one-story concrete walls of the rear addition.

The interior of the building's ground floor measures approximately 4,312 square feet in size. It is composed of a large dining/recreation area, an approximately 800 square foot present commercial space, two offices, and a kitchen. The 748 square foot addition contains restrooms and storage space. An open steel stair fitted with an electric lift rises to the second floor. The second floor, approximately 4,410 square feet in size, is comprised of the general lodge room, an ante-room, women's and men's dressing rooms, and a library. The third floor, approximately 1,980 square feet in size, contains a kitchen, recreation area and dining hall facility, and storage.

The first floor dining/recreation area has a vinyl tile floor, wood paneled walls and an acoustical tiled, ten foot high dropped ceiling. Kitchen walls and ceiling are plastered. The present commercial space interior has been modernized with dropped ceiling.

The second floor is dominated by the general lodge room which was constructed in 1909. The room, which remains entirely intact, measures approximately 45 by 55 feet and has an eighteen foot high ceiling. The paneled ceiling is distinguished by boxed beams which join the pilastered columns at the walls. Cornice molding and paired brackets constitute additional decorative elements. Interior walls are composed of painted lath and plaster. The floor is hardwood. Benches line two walls of the room. Original light fixtures remain in place. Lodge furniture,

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dating from both the first Masonic building and the 1909 remodel are employed throughout the room. The remainder of the second floor is composed in part, of the anteroom and women's lounge. The curvilinear plaster walls, rounded ceilings and arches reflect their 1928 construction date. A small library with French doors, restrooms, storage, furnace room and stair to the third floor comprise the second floor space.

The third floor is situated above the front portion of the two lower floors and is approximately 45 x 54 feet in size. It contains a recreation room, dining room, kitchen and dressing room. These rooms were used by the lodge for its social activities while the U.S. Post Office occupied the ground floor of the building. The rooms contain original light fixtures and linoleum.

The Ashland Masonic Lodge Building, which remains on its original site, reflects two remodellings in its present conformation, one in 1909 and one in 1928. With the ground floor devoted to governmental and commercial purposes throughout its history, the Masonic organization chose twice during its long history to remain in the original location and to enlarge, rather than to relocate. The building's changes reflect choices made by the Masonic fraternity in order to prosper -- changes inspired by shifting patterns in Ashland and similarly experienced in the Masonic movement throughout the United States.

The general lodge room, entirely intact within the large 1909 addition, reflects the period of significance, 1908-1912 when Ashland's growth expanded. The exterior facade, with its 1928 third story addition and Period classical detailing, reveals the decade of increased Masonic interest that followed the first World War. Despite alteration to a portion of the lower store front, the great proportion of the building evokes the sense of the period in which it gained historic significance and successfully conveys its historic associations.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Period of Significance

1880-1930

~~1908-1912~~

1920-1930

Significant Dates

~~1909, 1928~~

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Marsh, L.S.P. (1879-1880)

Clark, Frank C. (1909, 1928)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Ashland Masonic Lodge Archives

Ashland Masonic Lodge Building
Name of Property

Jackson, Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.13 acres Ashland, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	0
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5	2	3	5	8	0
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4	6	7	1	4	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

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4

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Katherine C. Atwood with assistance of Vincent Claflin, Chairman,
History Committee, Ashland Lodge No. 23 A.F. and A.M.

organization _____ date November, 1991

street & number 102 South Pioneer Street telephone (503) 482-9714

city or town Ashland state Oregon zip code 97520

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ashland Lodge No. 23 A.F. and A.M.

street & number 25 North Main Street, PO Box 81 telephone _____

city or town Ashland state Oregon zip code 97520

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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SUMMARY

The building of Ashland Lodge No. 23 of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons located on North Main Street at the heart of Ashland was completed and opened for use in 1880. As originally constructed, it was a brick building of two stories in the Italianate style. Its design is attributed to L. S. P. Marsh, a local contractor. It had an arcaded ground story of seven bays, and second story segmental-arched openings were connected at the arch head by a distinctive serpentine belt course. The second story was enlarged for an assembly room in 1909, and, some 20 years later, a partial third story was added for dining room, kitchen and storage space. It was also at this time, in 1928, that the building front was remodeled in the Georgian style. In both cases, the remodeling was designed by the leading local architect, Frank C. Clark.

By its superior height of three stories and its frontage of fully 50 feet, the Masonic Building dominates the block-long rank of buildings that defines the west side of the town square, or plaza. Its remodeled front, stuccoed and articulated with a pilaster strip colonnade with stylized Corinthian capitals and full entablature framing the central five bays, upholds the continuous street facade based on classical styles. Outer bays of the uppermost story are penetrated by frameless, round-arched openings having fanlight window sash and applied keystones. The parapet is plain except for a thin cornice molding and a central section slightly projected as the "attic" of the colonnade entablature.

As a result of a fire in 1959, the ground story is presently configured to accommodate a large dining room/recreation area on the south, commercial space on the north, and two offices and a kitchen in the back. Upper stories containing the second story lodge hall and various secondary spaces are intact and convey clearly the appearances of 1909 and 1928. The main assembly hall, a clear span space 45 feet wide and 55 feet long, has plaster wall cover and is detailed with bracketed boxed ceiling beams, classical cornice molding and pilasters with capitals and an encircling entablature. It is one of the few intact lodge rooms of pre-World War I vintage remaining in southern Oregon, and it is replete with historic furniture and equipment.

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The Ashland masonic Building is valuable as the dominant element of a cohesive backdrop for the town square. It is primarily significant, however, under National Register Criterion A for its significance as the home of A. F. & A. M. of Oregon Lodge No. 23 for all but the first five years of its history in Ashland. Lodge No. 23 had its origin in nearby Phoenix in 1858, but was rechartered in 1875 for the leading agricultural trading center in the Bear Creek Valley. Organizations such as the Masons and Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the affiliated groups that were formed by female relations focused upon social ceremony and ritual as a means of strengthening bonds and encouraging moral improvement. The fraternal movement was strong in Ashland, and many of its leading citizens were active in it. After the First World War, emphasis within the fraternal movement shifted from ritual to community service and charitable projects. The Masons in Ashland eventually specialized in awarding scholarships to deserving high school graduates.

The Masonic Building, with its grand classically-detailed meeting hall and Georgian facade, reflects the vigor of local fraternal life in the years before the Great Depression. The date of its initial construction, however, makes it second only to Jacksonville's Masonic Building of 1877 among Jackson County buildings of its kind. Freemasonry is the oldest and most prominent of fraternal organizations established in America; it served as the model on which others were based. It was introduced in the pre-Revolutionary era as a philosophical society embracing liberal ideas of the Enlightenment in England that concerned the equality of man, the power of reason, and so on. Its ultimate archetypes were the ancient stonemason's guilds. The movement has continued without interruption since the 1730s, and has been reinvigorated at various times by religious attitudes, development of the West, and other currents. In Ashland, as elsewhere, the A. F. & A. M. lodges were founded on the concepts of personal growth, mutual assistance and public benefit.

As was customary in the 19th Century building enterprises of fraternal orders throughout the western United States, ground story commercial space was leased to offset the costs of maintaining the assembly building. The buildings typically were two or more stories in height to accommodate the organization's facilities, and they were invariably located in the heart of the business district.

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In the winter of 1949, several building foundations on Ashland's plaza were damaged in the flooding of Ashland Creek. The lower building front of the Masonic Building was remodeled in the aftermath. Documentation has been found to show that Kaibak flagstone, a fashionable facing material of the day, was in place by May of 1950. Later, following the fire of 1959 that damaged the interior, glass block was used to fill in the plate glass display window space of the north stonefront.

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Constructed in 1880 and extensively enlarged and remodelled, first in 1909 and again in 1928, the Ashland Masonic Lodge Building is centrally situated in the commercial district of Ashland, Oregon. The building is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with two periods of Ashland's social development -- first between 1908 and 1912, years of rapid population growth -- and again between 1920 and 1940, when a local resurgent interest in the Masonic movement contributed importantly to the community's character. Ashland's pre-World War I years were typified by extensive orchard development and railroad advancement. The post-World War I revitalization of Ashland's Masonic organization paralleled a national renewed interest in Masonry, and reflected shifting social patterns. The Ashland Masonic Lodge Building contributes significantly to our understanding of Ashland's social organization during the period 1920-1940. The building substantially retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling and clearly conveys its historic associations.

Ashland, Oregon, situated at the southern end of the Bear Creek Valley, lies between the Siskiyou Mountains to the south and the Cascade Range to the northeast. Surrounding ridges form a natural boundary that sets the community apart in relative isolation. Ashland Creek, the city's primary natural water source, originates in the national forest to the south, and flows south to north through western Ashland before entering Bear Creek north of town. (1) A linear city, Ashland has a modified grid street pattern which reveals the influence of landforms, stream courses, railroad location and main travel routes. (2) The area historically known as the Plaza is centrally located and accessible by North Main Street, a route created as part of the earliest stage road.

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Ashland was established in 1852 when several miners-turned-settlers crossed the Siskiyou Divide from California and settled on Ashland Creek. That year Abel Helman and Eber Emery constructed a sawmill on Helman's donation land claim, and in 1854 the two, with others, built a flour mill nearby. Comprised of a hotel, store, cabinet shop, livery and blacksmith shop, the small community was officially named Ashland Mills in 1855. In 1867, after intense competition with nearby Jacksonville, businessmen constructed a woolen mill in Ashland, further advancing industrial development.(3) A commercial district developed gradually along the stage road at the Plaza and residential neighborhoods evolved nearby. Ashland was incorporated on October 13, 1874 with 300 residents.

On March 11, 1879 a devastating fire raged through the business district destroying wooden buildings along the west side of the Plaza. The structures which replaced the ruined frame buildings were constructed of brick. The Ashland Masonic organization, Ashland Lodge No. 23, A.F. & A.M., erected one of the first new buildings. The cornerstone for the new Masonic hall was placed August 18, 1879 in a ceremony attended by much of the community.(4) On Christmas Day, 1879 a public supper and party was held in the building, celebrating both the day and the new structure. Ashland's new Masonic hall firmly established that organization's presence in the community.

Freemasonry, an oath-bound fraternal and benevolent association, remains the oldest and most successful of all fraternal organizations. (5) Brought to the United States from England in the 1730's as a philosophical society, the organization grew rapidly and significantly influenced the United States' social and political history. Freemasonry experienced a dramatic increase in membership during the the Civil War when soldiers found strength in common ties--an allegiance which continued after the war.(6) Like other fraternal organizations during the last half of the 19th century, Masonry offered support and stability during years of social and political change.(7))

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One social historian noted:

It would be hard to overemphasize the profound transformations taking place in the decades after the Civil War. . . small towns, dependent on the outside world in many ways, somehow managed to maintain a sense of local autonomy, and lodges contributed to this. (8)

Ashland's Masonic Lodge had been founded in June, 1875 when a charter was granted to Ashland citizens, many of who had been affiliated earlier with a lodge at Phoenix, Oregon. The Phoenix Masonic Lodge No. 23 had surrendered its charter in 1861 due to a lack of attendance and their lodge number re-assigned to Ashland.(9)

The new brick Masonic building soon became an important part of Ashland's social and business life. Prominent citizens counted themselves as members. H.B. and E.V. Carter established Ashland's first bank next to the lodge building. Jacob Wagner, flour mill owner, Patrick Dunn, former territorial legislator, W.H. Atkinson, prominent businessman, and J.H. Skidmore, educator all were loyal members. In June, 1890 the United States Post Office moved into the building's ground floor where it would remain for over sixty years. The Masonic Lodge, as landlords, furnished the post office boxes, furniture and the safe. (10)

The lodge soon established a pattern of community involvement. On December 17, 1892 the Ashland Women's Civic Improvement Club, meeting to plan a new city park, held a public reception in the lodge building. Although the weather was extremely cold, over 100 Ashland citizens attended the event. In March, 1893 the Ashland Women's Relief Corps held a social evening in the hall. The lodge also continued its long tradition of placing cornerstones for public buildings and of conducting funeral services. A historian of the Masonic organization noted: "These ceremonies began with colorful processions and ended with speeches by public and Masonic officials. (11)

By 1900, with 75 members, Ashland's lodge had more than doubled in size since their building's construction in 1879. (12) The organization's growth reflected substantial changes occurring in the community. The population, which stood at 2634 in 1900, would reach 5010 by 1910.(13) Development was encouraged by several factors, notably the continued expansion and success of orcharding in the Ashland area, as in the rest of the Rogue Valley.

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Acres of peaches, pears and apples flourished. Rail transportation assisted the fruit industry, the woolen mill, the local creamery and woodworking plants as well as other commercial enterprises. The rails also boosted the tourist industry.

Between 1900 and 1910, Ashland Masonic Lodge membership expanded along with the general population, reaching a membership total of approximately 150 in 1910.(14) The organization planned substantial changes to their building to accomodate the growth without sacrificing the income obtained from the ground floor rented spaces. In November, 1909 the Ashland Tidings reported the plans:

Ashland Lodge No. 23, A.F. & A.M. has revised its plans for rebuilding and enlarging the Masonic Temple and will hurry the large annex and remodelling of the second story, leaving the third floor construction for a later date. The contract for extending the second story walls of the 40 x 50 rear annex was let this week to R.I. Stuart. . .The second floor plans provide for a large main lodge room, 58'x 36', with a commodious banquet room . . . In addition, more room is provided for anterooms, etc. The expenditure required under the building plans to be carried out cost from \$8000 to \$10,000 . . . (15)

The new addition increased the depth of the building from 60 to 100 feet. During the summer of 1913 additional improvements were made to the exterior. Modern plate windows, with transoms, were installed on the lower facade.(16)

Ashland saw substantial development during the 1920's. In 1923 a group of Ashland businessmen planned construction of the nine-story Lithia Springs Hotel which opened in 1925. Increased traffic along the Pacific Highway brought tourists through Ashland and the commercial district continued to expand. Ashland lodge membership also flourished in the post-World War I years, and had reached 218 participants by 1920. (17) Members continued to participate in civic and benevolent activities and were particularly concerned with providing financial assistance to local needy families.(18)

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In March, 1928, numbering 280 members, the Ashland Masonic Lodge initiated plans for enlarging their space. A building committee considered several choices, including remodelling, acquiring new space by rent, adding another story, reclaiming the ground floor, and a constructing a new building. In May, 1928 the lodge hired architect Frank Clark, who had prepared plans for the 1909 improvements. (19). The lodge secretary expressed the groups indecision regarding future plans: " The Lodge is . . . halting between two opinions as to remodelling the old structure or building a new temple." (20))

At the June 7, 1928 lodge meeting, plans were announced for the addition of a third story over the original portion of the frontage, to include dining and kitchen areas. The facade of the building would be remodelled to accomodate the new third story.(21) The general lodge room would remain intact. The local paper announced:

Improvements to be made at an estimated cost of \$13,000 at the Masonic Building on the Plaza, adding a third story to the present structure, remodelling the front of the building, a Grecian type of architecture to be followed, and refurnishing of the present quarters, are major improvements outlined in the project. Plans for the improvement have been approved and the work will soon start.

The Masonic Building is occupied by the post office, the Plaza Cafe and Masonic Lodge headquarters on the second floor. Dining room and kitchen will be on the third story which will be added. The lodge is one of the strongest fraternal organizations in the city. . ." (22)

In the same issue, the Ashland Tidings editor devoted his column to the lodge's announced plans:

The decision of local Masons to expend \$13,000 in the improvement of their quarters here is evidence of the progressive spirit of the organization. The Masonic building, situated as it is in the heart of the city, with remodelling done, will be a credit to both the local lodge and to Ashland." (23)

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Frank Clark's drawings were accepted and the architect supervised construction of the remodelling project.(24) By October 11, 1928 work on the structure was well underway and on November 17, 1928 an informal opening ceremony was held and attended by over 200 lodge members. (25) On December 5, 1928 lodge members dedicated Reeder Gulch Dam in the Ashland Canyon. A special program was held in the park where a replica of the dam had been built, since the actual location was remote.

The expansion of Ashland's Masonic facilities reflected not only the organization's increased local strength but that of Masonry throughout the nation as well. During the 1920's expansive new quarters were constructed for thriving lodges in many cities. Organizations in some smaller cities such as Ashland adapted their existing facilities. The 1928 remodeling of Ashland's Masonic Lodge Building expresses locally the national fraternal movement's post-World War I golden age. During the 1920's fraternal movements grew in strength while the country struggled for normalcy and to adjust to dramatic new technological and industrial developments.

Changes, however occurred in lodge organizational structure. For the first time, secular activities assumed precedence over ritual, "revealing a pre-occupation with liesure-time pursits made possible by advanced industrialization and general middle-class prosperity." (26) Members demanded that principles extend out to the community and grand lodges encouraged individual lodges to pursue general charitable projects that included milk funds, Christmas trees, summer camps and scholarships. Lynn Dumenil states in her history of Masonry in America:

The progressive's struggle to prevent the decline of Masonry by modernizing it, provides insight into the changes in cultural values that had accompanied America's own modernization. More emphatically, Masonic experience illuminates the nature and importance of the secular spirit of the 1920's. (29)

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In Ashland as in the rest of the United States competition provided by movies, radios and the automobile, meant that the lodge had to provide attractive attendance incentives. The 1928 remodeling of the Masonic Building encouraged use of the facility for programs, dinner parties and movies, thus enhancing the organization's attractiveness to members.

Within a year after the dedication of the Masonic Lodge Building's new addition, the stock market crash signalled the beginning of the Depression. Economic conditions worsened over the country and as the the 1930's wore on, the local Masons struggled to assist members and their families with medical and funeral costs, often paying all accumulated bills. Scholarships were awarded to local students and Ashland charities received generous contributions. (30) Meeting minutes through this period reflect the organization's continued effort to retain members and to collect dues. The difficulties of the Depression years, reflected in meager incomes and forced mobility, seriously affected the lodge's stability.

Unlike earlier postwar periods, the years after World War II did not produce dramatically renewed lodge growth. Fraternal historians trace the decline to a variety of factors. Lynn Dumenil suggests that while the phenomenal post-World War I growth had increased membership, it had also affected Masonry's ability to live up to its elite image. In addition she suggests that, " Its enlarged size lessened the sense of fraternity that earlier lodge life may have been able to establish. She suggests:

The innovations in Masonry in the 1920's helped the organization to survive, but not thrive. It suffered heavy losses during the Depression, as many men dropped out or were suspended. There was a slight resurgence in the 1950's but Masonry never again achieved the popularity and prestige it had enjoyed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (31)

Ashland's post office, long established in the Masonic Building, was moved to a new location in March, 1954. On November 25, 1959 an early morning fire began in the cafe situated in the northerly half of the building and severely damaged the ground floor interior. The local newspaper reported that damage to the building exceeded \$30,000. As early as 1950, the lower facade had been remodeled as a result of flood damage from the overflow of Ashland Creek. At that time, the front was

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clad with Kaibak flagstone, but the central, recessed entrance and plate glass display windows of the Plaza Cafe continued the storefront organization that was traditional on Main Street. Later, probably at the time of the fire damage in 1959, the display windows were filled in with glass block. (32)

The Ashland Masonic Lodge's place in fraternal development within the Rogue Valley is well established. In 1910, a peak year of fraternal activity in the community, the Ashland city directory lists the Masonic Lodge, its affiliate organizations and eleven other fraternal or benevolent groups. By 1955 only three -- the Masonic Lodge, I.O.O.F organization, and Elks Lodge -- remained. The I.O.O.F Building at the Plaza's north end retains its late 19th century configuration, while the Masonic building near the opposite end of the Plaza, reflects, on its exterior, the decade of 1920 to 1930. The three extant lodges in Ashland, the Ashland Masonic Lodge Building (1879) the I.O.O.F. Building, (1880) and the Elks Building, (1910), reflect three major eras in fraternal development in the city.

The Ashland Masonic Lodge Building is one of few remaining fraternal structures in Jackson County. Jacksonville's Masonic Building, completed for Warren Lodge in 1877, remains the oldest extant fraternal building in the area. Medford's Masonic Temple, the Medford I.O.O.F Building and the Redmen's Hall have been demolished. The Medford Elk's Building and former Woodmen of the World Hall remain. The Gold Hill-I.O.O.F. building, once two stories in height, has been reduced to one story and has experienced dramatic alteration.

Ashland's Masonic Lodge Building's evolution between 1879 and 1930 precisely define the lodge's development as a 19th century organization and as an adapting, 20th century one. First in a borrowed space (1875), then in a fine new brick structure (1879), next in a building doubled in size (1909), and finally in a three-story remodelled structure (1929). Ashland Masonic Lodge changes reflect the social changes occurring within the community as well as within the national Masonic movement.

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The Ashland Masonic Lodge Building has occupied its space on the Plaza for over 110 years and remains the flagship building representing 19th century Masonry. The interior general lodge room is an intact expression of the organization's needs and taste during a period of great growth between 1908 and 1912. The building's exterior retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling consistent with the building's configuration in 1928. The building remains the place where a significant aspect of Ashland's social development contributed to the community's history.

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- (1) Backes, G. Bryon. "The Ashland Area and Its Environs." Thesis. University of Oregon, M.S. Degree, June, 1959, p. 12.
- (2) Ibid., p. 7,12.
- (3) Farnham, Wallace D. RELGIGION AS AN INFLUENCE IN LIFE AND THOUGHT; JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON 1860-1880. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oregon, 1955. p. 40.
- (4) Ashland Tidings, March 14, 1879; May 16, 1879. Builder L.S.P. March, prominent Ashland contractor, was responsible for construction. He also built the Jackson County Courthouse in Jacksonville, Oregon.
- (5) Franco, Barbara. Fraternally Yours: A Decade of Collecting. Lexington, Mass: Museum of Our National Heritage. 1986, p. 8, 20.
- (6) Ibid., p. 8, 13.
- (7) Ibid., p. 19.
- (8) Dumenil, Lynn. Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 89.
- (9) Halvorsen, Henry H. Masonry comes to Southern Oregon: Early History of Warren Lodge No. 10, 1855-1877. Medford, Oregon: 1978, p. 12; A chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star was formed at Ashland on March 30, 1880. It is the oldest chapter of that body in Oregon.
- (10) The safe remains in place in the Ashland Masonic Lodge Building, along with the lodge's own safe.
- (11) Dumenil, Lynn. Freemasonry and American Culture, p. 8.
- (12) Ashland Masonic Lodge Records.
- (13) U.S. Bureau of Census, Census of Population, 1900; 1910; 1920.
- (14) Ibid.
- (15) Ashland Tidings, November 11, 1909, 1:4; February 17, 1910; Medford Mail Tribune, January 15, 4:3.

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- (16) Ashland Tidings, August 25, 1913; Minutes of the Ashland Masonic Lodge, September 11, 1913.
- (17) Ashland Masonic Lodge Records.
- (18) Minutes of the Ashland Masonic Lodge, November 11, 1920; May 10, 1921.
- (19) Ibid., March 18, 1928; May 12, 1928; May 10, 1928; May 22, 1928.
- (20) W.H. Day, "Ashland Lodge No. 23 A.F. & A.M., 1926, n.p.
- (21) Minutes of Ashland Masonic Lodge, June 7, 1928.
- (22) Ashland Tidings, June 8, 1928, 1;2
- (23) Ibid., 1:1
- (24) Frank Chamberlain Clark began his practice in Ashland in 1903. He was born in Greene, New York, December 27, 1872. After two years at the Cooper Union, Clark served in the architectural offices of Arthur Curis Longyear, Oscar S. Teale, Robert Williams Gibson of New York, and in the office of Stanford White. During this employment Clark was responsible for the architectural details of Madison Square Garden. Clark came to the west coast in late 1896 and worked two years with Frederich Roehrig in Los Angeles. He opened his own office in 1899 and went to Arizona to execute projects in Prescott, Tuscon and Jerome. Clark's first project in Oregon was the design for the administration building at the State Normal School at Ashland in 1903. Among buildings for which Clark is noted are the Chappell-Swedenburg House and the Elk's Building in Ashland, the Medford Elks Building, the Harry and David Orchard Packing House near Medford, several homes in the Oakdale Historic District and over 70 additional extant residences in the Rogue Valley.
- (25) Ashland Tidings, November 17, 1928, 1:2.
- (26) Dumenil, Lynn. Freemasonry and American Culture., p. 149-151.
- (27) Ibid., pp. xiii-xiv.
- (28) Ibid. p. 170.

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- (29) Ibid., pp. 193-194
- (30) Minutes of the Ashland Masonic Lodge 1926-1940.
- (31) Dumenil, Lynn. Freemasonry and American Culture., p. 218.
- (32) Ashland Tidings, May 20, 1950. Advertisement of Scheffel Construction Company and Medford Neon Company documenting completion of storefront renovation for Plaza Cafe using Kaibak flagstone, the "hottest" thing in building material.

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1. Ashland Masonic Lodge Building
Ashland, Jackson County, Oregon
Kay Atwood
September, 1991
Kay Atwood, 102 South Pioneer Street, Ashland, OR 97520
East Elevation and Facade
Photograph 1 of 6

Note: With the exception of view description and photograph number, and an historic photograph, all information remains the same for each photograph

2. West elevation (rear of building)
Photograph 2 of 6
3. Interior: General Lodge Room
Photograph 3 of 6
4. Interior: General Lodge Room ceiling detail.
Photograph 4 of 6
5. Interior: Anteroom
Photograph 5 of 6
6. Ashland Masonic Building
Ashland, Jackson County, Oregon
Unknown
c. 1940
Terry Skibby, 611 Beach Street, Ashland, Oregon 97520
Facade
6 of 6

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- Ashland Tidings, March 14, 1879; November 11, 1909; August 25, 1913;
June 28, 1928.
- Dumenil, Lynn. Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930. New
Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Franco, Barbara. Fraternally Yours: A Decade of Collecting. Lex-
ington, Mass: Museum of Our National Heritage. 1986.
- Halvorsen, Henry H. Masonry Comes to Southern Oregon: Early History
of Warren Lodge No. 10, 1855-1877. Medford, Oregon: 1978.
- Minutes of the Ashland Masonic Lodge: November 11, 1920; May 10,
1921; March 18, 1928; May 22, 1928; June 7, 1928.

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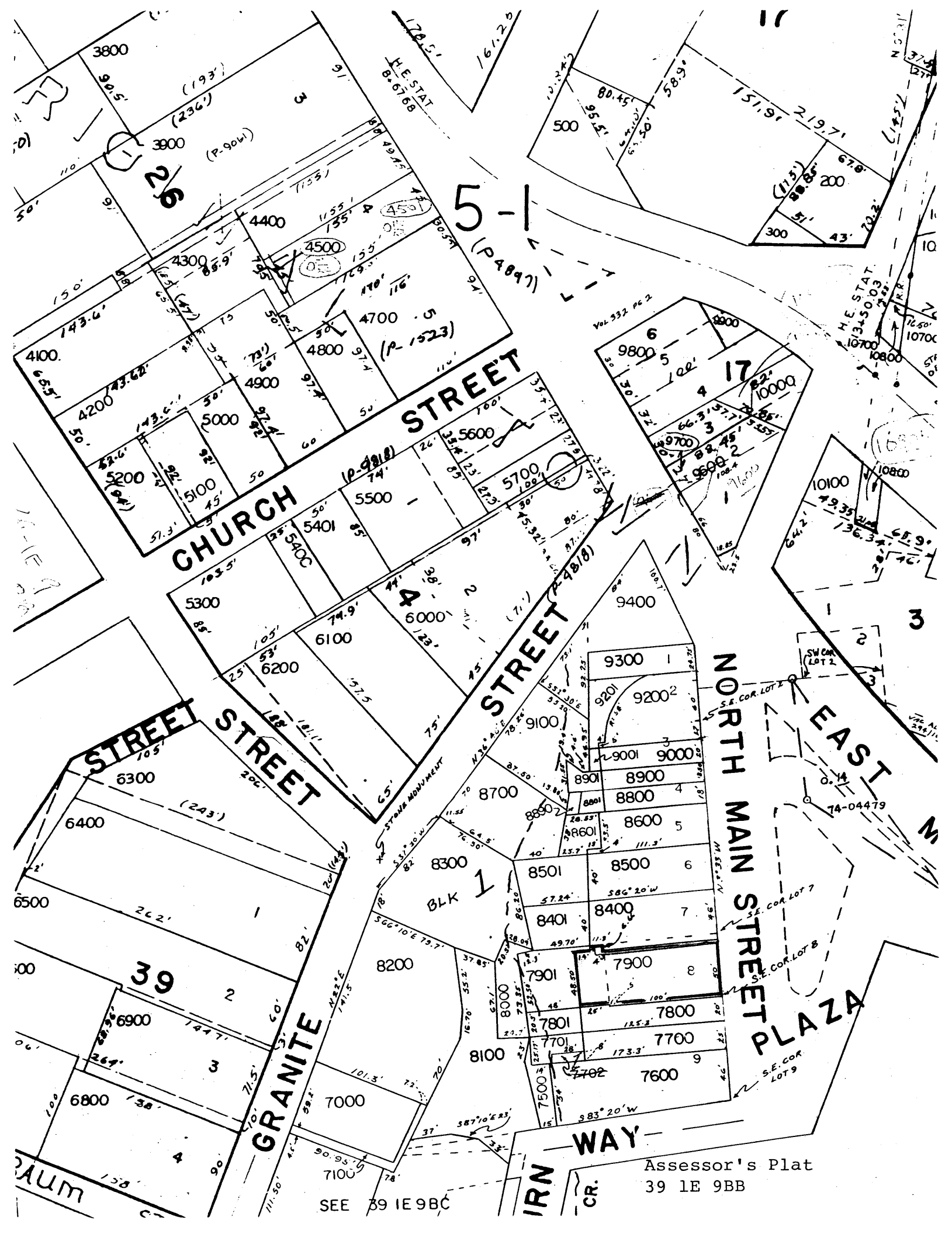
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is located in NW 1/4 NW 1/4 Section 9, Township 30 South, Range 1 East, Willamette Meridian in Ashland, Jackson County, Oregon. It is legally described as Tax Lot 7900, Block 1 of the Original Town of Ashland.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated area corresponds to legally recorded lot lines associated with the historic Ashland Masonic Lodge Building.



5-1 (P4897)

CHURCH STREET

STREET

STREET

NORTH MAIN STREET

EAST

PLAZA

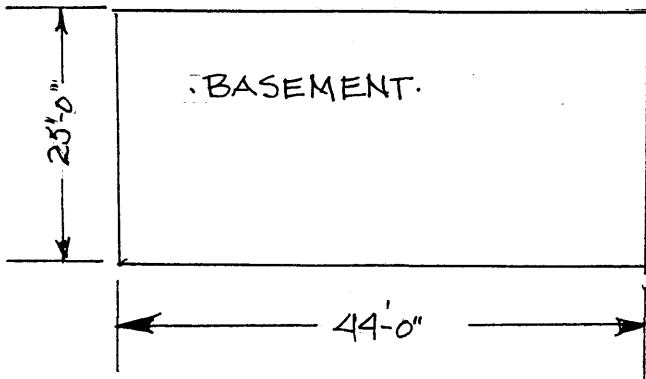
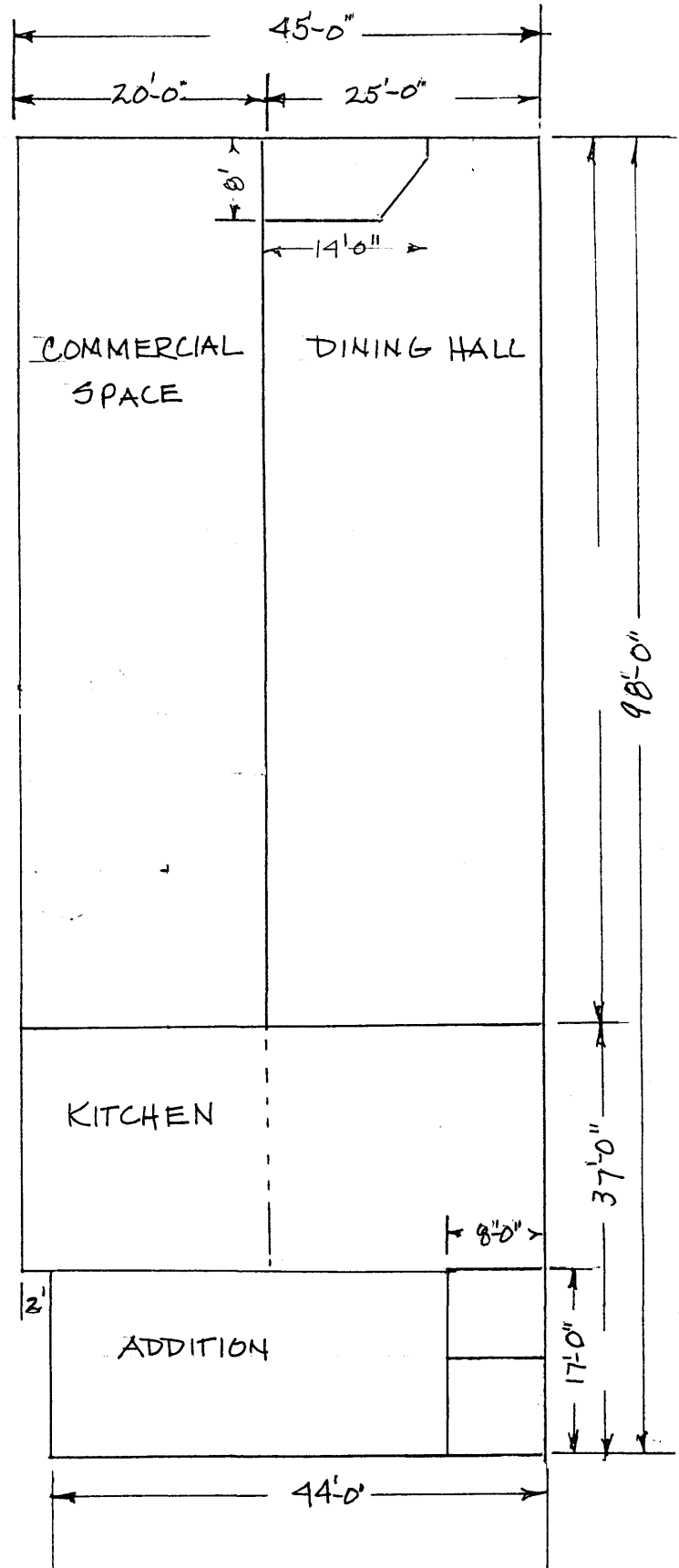
IRON WAY

GRANITE

Assessor's Plat
39 1E 9BB

SEE 39 1E 9BC

NORTH MAIN STREET

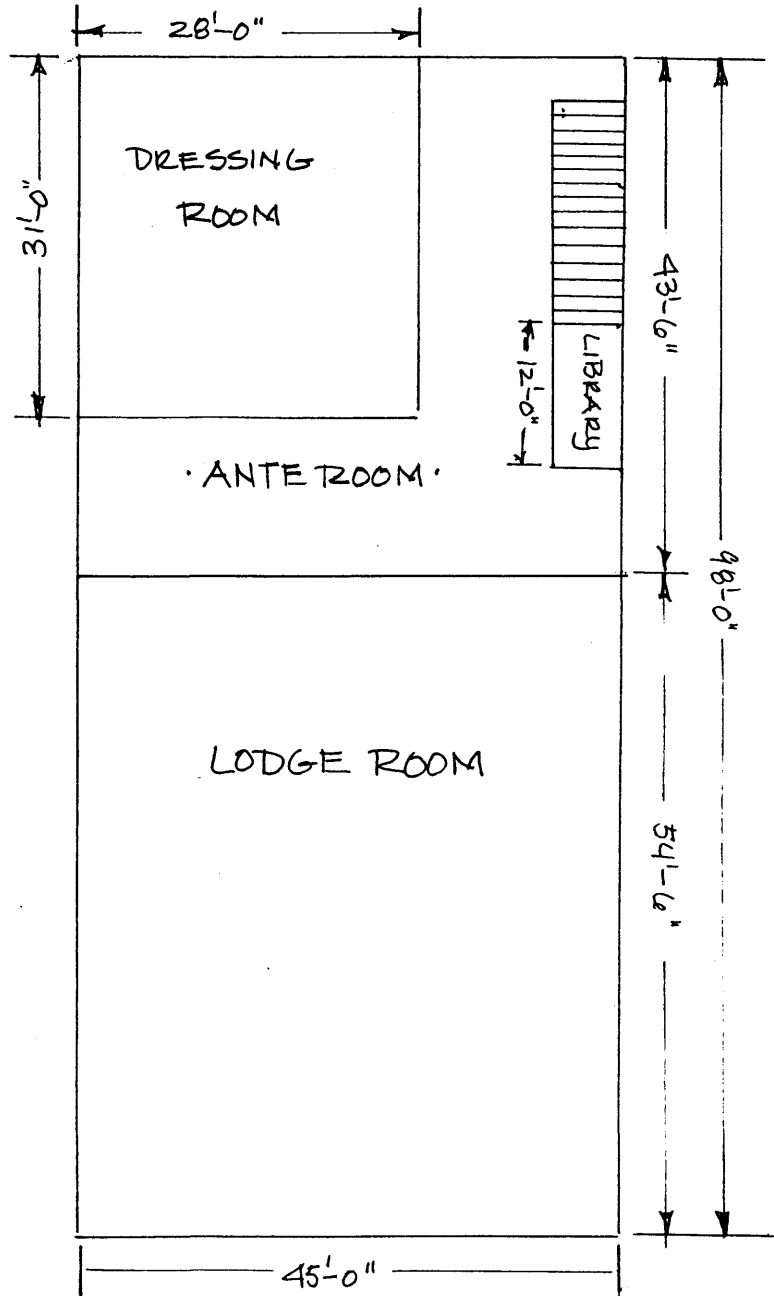
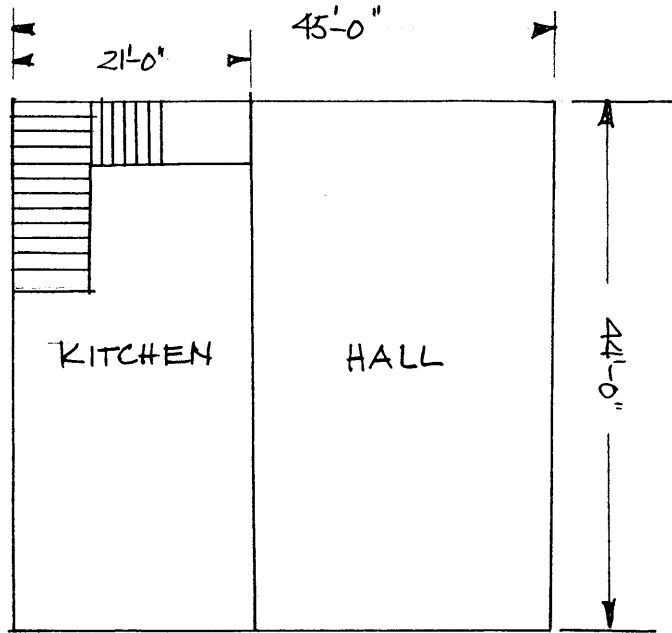


* ASHLAND MASONIC
LODGE BUILDING *
NOT TO EXACT SCALE

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

NORTH MAIN STREET

THIRD FLOOR



ASHLAND MASONIC
LODGE BUILDING
SECOND FLOOR
NOT TO EXACT SCALE