

HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY FORM

State of Washington, Department of Community Development
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
111 West 21st Avenue, KL-11
Olympia, WA 98504 (206) 753-4011

IDENTIFICATION SECTION

Field Site No. 34-716 OAHP No. _____ Date Recorded 10/16/85
Site Name Historic American Legion Hall
Common n/a
Field Recorder Shanna Stevenson/Tom Costantini
Owner's Name American Legion Post #3
Address 219 West Legion
City/State/Zip Code Olympia, WA 98501

LOCATION SECTION

Address 219 West Legion Way
City/Town/County/Zip Code Olympia/Thurston/98501
Twp. 18N Range 2W Section 14 ¼ Section SW ¼ ¼ Section SW
Tax No./Parcel No. 785076001 Acreage less than one
Quadrangle or map name Tumwater Scale: 1:24,000
UTM References Zone 10 Easting 507420 Northing 5209720
Plat/Block/Lot Block 76, Sylvester Plat of Olympia, Lots 1 & 4.
Supplemental Map(s) _____

Status

- Survey/Inventory
- National Register
- State Register
- Determined Eligible
- Determined Not Eligible
- Other (HABS, HAER, NHL)
- Local Designation

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Neg. No. 26-30A
(Roll No. & Frame No.)
View of NW corner
Date 10/16/85

Classification District Site Building Structure Object
District Status NR SR LR INV
Contributing Non-Contributing
District/Thematic Nomination Name Downtown Olympia MPA

Number of contributing resources: 1 building
noncontributing resources: 0

DESCRIPTION SECTION

Materials & Features/Structural Types

Building Type Legion hall
Plan Rectangular
Structural System Masonry
No. of Stories Two and one-half

Cladding (Exterior Wall Surfaces)

- Log
- Horizontal Wood Siding
 - Rustic/Drop
 - Clapboard
- Wood Shingle
- Board and Batten
- Vertical Board
- Asbestos/Asphalt
- Brick
- Stone
- Stucco
- Terra Cotta
- Concrete/Concrete Block
- Vinyl/Aluminum Siding
- Metal (specify) _____
- Other (specify) _____

Roof Type

- Gable
- Flat
- Monitor
- Gambrel
- Shed
- Hip
- Pyramidal
- Other (specify) vaulted parapet

Roof Material

- Wood Shingle
- Wood Shake
- Composition
- Slate
- Tar/Built-Up
- Tile
- Metal (specify) _____
- Other (specify) _____
- Not visible

Foundation

- Log
- Post & Pier
- Stone
- Brick
- Not visible
- Concrete
 - Block
 - Poured
 - Other (specify) _____

High Styles/Forms (check one or more of the following)

- Greek Revival
- Gothic Revival
- Italianate
- Second Empire
- Romanesque Revival
- Stick Style
- Queen Anne
- Shingle Style
- Colonial Revival
- Beaux Arts/Neoclassical
- Chicago/Commercial Style
- American Foursquare
- Mission Revival
- Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean
- Tudor Revival
- Craftsman/Arts & Crafts
- Bungalow
- Prairie Style
- Art Deco/Art Moderne
- Rustic Style
- International Style
- Northwest Style
- Commercial Vernacular
- Residential Vernacular (see below)
- Other (specify) _____

Integrity (Include detailed description in Description of Physical Appearance)

	Intact	Slight	Moderate	Extensive
Changes to plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to windows	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to original cladding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to interior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vernacular House Types

- Gable front
- Gable front and wing
- Side gable
- Cross gable
- Pyramidal/Hipped
- Other (specify) _____

MAY 6 1987

JUN 17 1987

NARRATIVE SECTION

Study Unit Themes (check one or more of the following)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/Government/Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture/Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Science & Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage (specify) _____ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Movements/Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning/Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing/Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Unit Sub-Theme(s) (specify) _____ |

Statement of Significance

Date of Construction 1921 Architect/Engineer/Builder Joseph Wohleb, architect Period of Significance: 1921-1937

- In the opinion of the surveyor, this property appears to meet the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places
 Level of Significance: local
- In the opinion of the surveyor, this property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local).

The American Legion Hall, designed by Joseph Wohleb in a utilitarian but distinctive style, is significant for its association with the history of the civic life of the city. One of the first Legion posts organized in Washington, the hall is the oldest in continuous use in Washington State and one of the oldest in the United States specifically designed as an American Legion facility.

The Alfred William Leach Post No. 3 was organized in Olympia in 1919, the third such organization in the state. The building was designed in 1920-21 by Joseph Wohleb and opened in 1921. The Olympia Rotary and members of the Legion actually contributed to and participated in the construction of the building. The establishment of the post in the years after World War I provided an important social opportunity for the city's World War veterans. Just as importantly, the post served many legislators who were Legion members at home but belonged to the Olympia facility during the legislative session. In 1924, the American Legion band was formed. The group has continuously performed at almost all public functions in Olympia including parades, ceremonial events, and concerts. The band was rated first nationally in 1938 and 1939 and placed high in national competition in subsequent years. The Legion Hall served more than just the Legion, however. Shortly after its construction, the Legion leased the facility to the local unit of the National Guard. In addition, the 245th Coastal Artillery group met here until the construction of the Olympia Armory in 1930.

During the 1930s, the Legion Hall was renovated as an ice skating facility, giving a number of local skaters an opportunity to practice and achieve national fame like Olympic skaters Carole and Pete Kennedy. The rink closed after World War II. The hall hosted a number of smokers and boxing matches as well as a number of inaugural and legislative balls since the 1920s. Throughout the years, many prominent civic and governmental leaders have belonged to the Legion. The group has had significant membership, reaching over 1,200 members in 1948. From 1952 to 1962, the Olympia Post Office was located in the hall and from 1965 until 1975, the City of Olympia leased the structure as a youth center. Currently, the hall is used for Legion activities and bingo.

Description of Physical Appearance

The American Legion Hall is located across from Capitol Lake abutting Legion Way on the north. The hall is a square two and one-half story brick structure of utilitarian design. The hall has a flat roofed section to the east and a larger vaulted roof section to the west. The stucco-clad front (north) facade is crowned by a parapet which rises to form a wide pediment-like gable in front of the vaulted section. The rear has a similar parapet. The parapet is edged with brick and the wall is decorated with horizontal and vertical brick bands. A wide brick archway at the left of the facade leads to the recessed main entry door, and an adjacent small window is the only first floor fenestration. The second story has small, square multi-paned casements with brick surrounds and the gable end has three similar windows with arched surrounds. The west wall is solid brick except for several small second story windows and a row of engaged pilasters. The exterior of the building is unchanged except for the brick infill of some small windows on the west side. The interior has been renovated through the years to conform to changing uses. The first floor includes a large hall with vaulted ceiling and the second story has large meeting rooms.

Major Bibliographic References

- Stevenson, Sharna, "Olympia Downtown Walking Tour," 1980.
- Interviews with David Swift, September 1986.