

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Summit School

AND/OR COMMON

Old Summit School

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

East Union Street &amp; Summit Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

7th-Mike Lowry

STATE

Washington

CODE

53

COUNTY

King

CODE

033

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER: *undetermined*

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Kemp E. Hiatt

STREET &amp; NUMBER

700 West Lee Street

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. King County Administration Building

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Fourth Avenue and James Street

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

STATE

Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

First Hill, An Inventory of Building and Urban Design Resources

DATE

1975

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority

CITY, TOWN

Seattle

STATE

Washington

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In early 1905 the Seattle School Board authorized the construction of Summit School. The school was designed by James Stephen, the Official School Architect who developed the Model School Plan of 1901 and was responsible for the design of over forty schools built within the Seattle School District. As a variation of the model plan, the design of Summit School is unlike any of the numerous other schools built during this period of tremendous population growth and increased school enrollment.

Old Summit School is located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 32, T25N, R4E of the Willamette Meridian. It occupies lots 3 through 7, the southern portion of Block 14 of Union Addition to the Plat of Seattle. Block 14 is bounded by East Union Street on the south; Crawford Place, which serves as an alley on the west; East Pike Street on the north; and Summit Avenue on the east. Situated on the northwest slope of First Hill, Summit School is approximately 50 feet below the actual summit of the Hill at Summit Avenue and East Cherry Street. The immediate neighborhood uphill and to the south is densely populated. The older hotels, hospitals and apartment houses; newer apartment houses, condominiums and retirement homes are interspersed with a few remaining residences which date from the earliest period of the development of First Hill. An active commercial strip is located to the north along East Pike Street. The 120 feet by 250 feet site of Summit School slopes down both to the north and to the west from the intersection of Summit Street and East Union Street. This northwesterly slope of the site created a challenging design problem for the architect as well as a dramatic westward view of Puget Sound and the City from the new school.

As a variation on the H-shaped Model School Plan of 1901, Summit School is essentially I-shaped with a main axis wing 45 feet by 180 feet oriented north/south and lateral north and south wings approximately 30 feet by 100 feet. Asphalt parking and playground areas surrounded by cyclone fences are adjacent to the building to the north and south. A large play area was never designed as part of the school yard due to what were believed to be ample wooded and open areas adjacent to the school in 1905. A curved concrete entrance ramp with a rusticated stone retaining wall connects the main east entrance with Summit Avenue. Summit Avenue between East Pike and East Union is paved with cobblestones and lined with street trees.

Summit School is a two story building with an unfinished attic, basement and sub-basement. The foundation, sub-basement and basement are constructed of concrete and faced with dark red brick where above grade on the north end. Wall, floor and roof construction are basically wood frame although portions of the

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basement and sub-basement use a cast iron structural system. The hipped roof with exposed rafter ends is covered with asphalt shingles and originally had decorative galvanized iron flashing at the ridges. The original central octagonal cupola, which functioned as part of the ventilation system, has also been removed. Originally the exterior was finished with painted Portland cement accentuated by wood molding trim. Presently the original exterior is covered by asbestos shingle siding.

Due to the northwesterly slope of the Summit School site, the school is distinguished by three major entrances which are on three separate floor levels. The main Summit Avenue (east) entrance, over which the original gilt letters state "SUMMIT SCHOOL", is a single-arched two story enclosed entry porch with a decorated stepped Mission Style parapet flanked on each side by a two story turret. This symmetrically located entrance is approached by a curved concrete ramp and opens onto the first floor level. The Union Street (south) entrance is a masonry double-arched enclosed entry porch which leads onto the stair landing between the first floor classroom level and the basement. Originally this masonry porch included a decorated stone and masonry stepped parapet. Although a north entry remains, the original entrance porch which duplicated the south entrance porch was removed in 1927 when a gymnasium was added below. This entrance now opens onto the basement level.

Window openings are basically large with double-hung wooden sash placed independently or in groups. Bulls-eye windows, open to the attic space, are located below the eave line in the north and south wings and main entrance facade. The main entrance facade is distinguished by a Palladian window and round head double-hung windows with multi-paned diamond shaped sash. Double-hung windows with round heads are also located above and to the sides of the north and south entrances. Stone keystones at the brick entrance and stone coping at window sills, window wells and chimneys highlight the facades.

The interior spaces of Summit School are centered around a 16 foot wide by 13 foot high corridor with open stairwells at each end. In contrast to the model school plan, only two classrooms are located

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in each of the end wings and a total of 13 classrooms and two offices are located on the first and second floors. An additional 3 classrooms are located in the north end of the basement level. Two large rooms, now somewhat altered, located on the basement and sub-basement levels were used as indoor playareas due to Seattles rainy climate. Lavatory facilities illuminated by skylights are also located on the basement and sub-basement levels. A metal spiral stair located in the south turret of the main entrance connects all floor levels. Stair balusters, window and interior trim are fine grained fir. Wall and ceiling surfaces are finished with hard plaster and interior doors are four panel with windows.

The earliest addition to the original 16 classroom building was the construction in 1914 of two additional classrooms. Constructed of concrete and masonry, and illuminated by skylights, they are located on each side of the main east entrance at the basement level. This work was carried out during the period when Edgar Blair served as Official School Architect. In 1928 a gymnasium wing was constructed to the north and downhill at a level slightly below the sub-basement. Because the gym opens onto the alley side and is below grade at Summit Avenue, its roof was developed into an asphalt paved playarea. Floyd Naramore served as Official School Architect at the time of its construction. The additions and alterations which have been made to Summit School are not major or intrusionary, thus its present appearance is essentially as it was when its doors first opened to the public in the Autumn of 1905.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Built 1905 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Stephen

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1905, Summit School represents the period of urban growth during the first decade of this century when Seattle's First Hill developed and its population and school enrollment dramatically increased. Constructed on the site of Old Grace Hospital, Summit School is the oldest extant school building built to serve the central city during this period of development. Summit School remains as an early vestige of the First Hill community which has evolved from a prestigious residential neighborhood to a densely populated neighborhood of hospitals and multiple family dwellings. The unique design of Summit School was developed by James Stephen, the Official School Architect responsible for the Model School Plan of 1901 and the design of over fifty schools in Seattle School District #1 and school districts throughout the State of Washington.

As Seattle expanded in the late 19th century, First Hill became an exclusive residential neighborhood. The westward sloping hill provided sites for prestigious homes with views over the City to Puget Sound. For nearly two decades Seattle's wealthy citizens chose to build large homes with lovely gardens and views on this hill. Eventually, as trolley lines were installed, smaller wood frame homes and businesses developed on the Hill.

Concurrent with the general expansion of the city was a tremendous increase in school enrollment. This increase prompted the School Board, over a seven year period between 1898 and 1905, to authorize the expenditure of approximately \$800,000 for the construction of fourteen new schools and additions to seven existing schools. In 1903, among their several current projects, the School Board considered the construction of an addition to Central School at 7th and Madison. Apparently, after investigating various sites and with funds remaining from an earlier school bond election, the Board instead decided to purchase five lots on the northwest corner of East Union Street and Summit Avenue and to build a new grammar school.

A portion of this property, on which Summit School was to be built, was the site of Old Grace Hospital. In 1885, when the first fine homes were being built on First Hill, Trinity Parish began the

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Seattle South

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,0 | 5,0 | 7,6,0 | 5,2 | 7,3 | 3,6,0

B    |    |    |    |    |   

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C    |    |    |    |    |   

D    |    |    |    |    |   

E    |    |    |    |    |   

F    |    |    |    |    |   

G    |    |    |    |    |   

H    |    |    |    |    |   

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 3 through 7, Block 14 of the Union Addition to the Plat of Seattle; a site approximately 120 feet by 250 feet.

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Katheryn Hills Krafft

ORGANIZATION

The Conservation Company

DATE

November 1978

STREET & NUMBER

1955 - 6th Avenue West

TELEPHONE

(206) 284-8556

CITY OR TOWN

Seattle

STATE

Washington

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

LOCAL   

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Jeanne M. Welch 7/27/79

TITLE

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Stone  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 10-4-79

ATTEST: W. Ray Stone  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 10/4/79

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construction of Grace Hospital. When construction was completed the following year this well equipped pioneer hospital was surrounded by woods. In 1899, for unknown reasons, Grace Hospital was abandoned. During the following five years it was used periodically as a boarding house and as a hotel. When Grace Hospital was demolished in order to construct Summit School the cornerstone was removed and given to Trinity Parish where it is now located in the courtyard adjacent to Trinity Church.

Upon purchase of the site, James Stephen, the Official School Architect, was authorized to prepare plans for a 16 classroom schoolhouse. The immediate need for a new school and the knowledge that it need not be built in stages, may have influenced his deviation from the model plan he had earlier developed. The Summit School floor plan varies from the model plan in the location of stairways and the number and location of classrooms. This plan, in conjunction with the design demands of the sloping site and the use of a stucco exterior finish and Mission Style parapets, resulted in a unique schoolhouse unlike any other built within the School District. The plans were prepared and approved rapidly over a thirteen week period between October 1st and December 30th, 1904. During January of 1905 the contractor (Robert Brown) was selected, a \$45,637.00 low bid was agreed upon, and Old Grace Hospital was under demolition. By mid-August the gilt lettered "SUMMIT SCHOOL" sign was in place and the janitor had been elected.

When the school opened its doors to the public in the Autumn of 1905 it drew enrollment from a neighborhood which was beginning to become a more diverse community of middle class as well as wealthy citizens. As modes of transportation provided the opportunity to live further from the City, other districts and neighborhoods began to attract families. In 1907 the construction of the Perry Hotel, which became Columbus Hospital and then Cabrini Hospital, signaled the beginning of the transformation of First Hill. Within a decade after the opening of Summit School, the eminence of First Hill as a prestigious residential district had diminished. Summit School operated as a grammar and elementary school, periodically

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housing overload classes from Broadway High School, for sixty years. Declining enrollment, an indication of the massive shift in population over these years, forced the school's closure in 1965. Between 1965 and 1973 the school building was used as an Alternative School and as an annex to Seattle Central Community College. Subsequently the School District sold Old Summit School and it is presently undergoing renovation and adaptive use planning.

James Stephen (1858 - 1938)

Summit School represents part of the career work of James Stephen, an architect who made a significant contribution to public school building programs throughout the State of Washington. He was a native of Woodstock, Ontario, and the son of an immigrant Scottish cabinetmaker who had earned his ocean passage working as a cabinetmaker in the castles of Scotland. The Stephen family migrated to the United States, eventually settling in Detroit and then Chicago, where as a young man James would have witnessed the reconstruction of Chicago after the fire of 1871. He was a trained cabinetmaker and a professional organmaker who apparently received his architectural training through professional experience and a course of study with the International Correspondence School of Chicago.

Stephen arrived in Seattle from Pasadena, California in June 1889 very shortly after the Great Fire and became immediately involved in the reconstruction program. In 1893 he entered into partnership with Timotheus Josenhans, an Engineer/Architect who was experienced in the design of educational facilities. Stephen and Josenhans most distinctive projects were the commissions for the design of the Administration Building (1895) and Stevens Hall (1896) on the Washington State University campus. Due to the effects of the economic depression, Stephen left this partnership and worked for a short while building pre-fabricated ships in Dutch Harbor, Alaska for the Yukon River trade during the Alaska Gold Rush.

School Board records indicate that in early 1898 the Board received an application from James Stephen for appointment as a school architect. The following year he was hired to prepare plans and



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specifications for Randall School and for an addition to Denny Fuhman (Seward) School. In 1901 the plans he designed for Greenlake School were adopted as the Model School Plan for the numerous schools the School Board intended to erect during the following decade. The model plan was essentially a two story H-shaped symmetrical plan with two classrooms in the central axis wing and four classrooms in each of the end wings which equalled a total of twenty classrooms. Stairways and classrooms were situated such that through phased construction a four classroom or twelve classroom schoolhouse could be expanded to the twenty classroom plan. Due to the substantially higher cost of masonry construction, the model plan called for wood frame construction. Shortly after the implementation of the model plan Stephen was elected by the School Board to serve as Official School Architect, a position which he held for the following eight years.

Although other architects periodically designed schools for the District, James Stephen was the primary architect for the numerous new schools and school additions built during this period of dramatic urban development. The schools and school additions designed by Stephen which are currently in use and date from this period include Madrona (1904), Beacon Hill (1904), Interlake (1904) Hay (1905), Seward (1905), Latona (1906), Lincoln High School (1906). Stevens (1906) and Coe (1907) While serving as Official School Architect, he made frequent visits to eastern cities in order to study innovations in school design, construction and equipment. Although a strong advocate of masonry construction of school structures, he was unable to convince the School Board to authorize the additional expense.

Stephen's agreement with the school district allowed him to maintain a large enough office to work on residential, commercial and public projects in addition to his school contracts. This work included two firehouses which have been demolished, that were detailed very similarly to Summit School. After the annexation of Ballard in 1908, he left his position with the School District in order to further broaden his practice, although he continued to design schools within the District. The most notable of these school projects being Queen

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Anne High School (1909).

During the following twenty years of his career he continued, in partnership with his son Frederick, and also William Brust, to design residences, public, commercial and school buildings throughout the State of Washington. These projects included schools in the communities of Edmonds, Meadowdale, Mt. Vernon, Olympia, Wenatchee, Woodinville, Leavenworth, Ellensburg and Hoquiam.

He was active in the formation of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA in 1894 and served as AIA vice-president in 1913. In 1914 he was appointed to serve as president when Charles Alden resigned due to his involvement with the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. In addition to his professional and civic activities, James Stephen was an avid outdoorsman, skilled photographer and an accomplished furniture maker.

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Barker, Mrs. David E. (Ida Grace), Richmond Beach, Washington. Granddaughter of James Stephen. Interviewed October 31, 1978.

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Levant, Sara. Seattle School Histories 1864-1974. Seattle Public Schools, 1974.

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Luhrman, Thelma L., Seattle, Washington. Attended Summit School 1906-1912. Interviewed October 16, 1978.

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Pacific Builder & Engineer: May 16, 1908, pg. 200; January 16, 1909, pg. 21; November 16, 1912, pg. 395; November 30, 1912, pg. 420; June 20, 1914, pg. 349; November 28, 1914, pg. 293.

Pacific Building Record: June 18, 1904, pg. 6; October 1, 1904, pg. 6; December 10, 1904, pg. 6.

Plan Files, Seattle School District, Department of Facilities, Planning and Construction.

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Stephen, J. Howard, Peshastin, Washington. Son of James Stephen. Interviewed October 1978