

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

✓ NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho TR)

✓ SITE NAME: Schmerschall, John F., House

SITE NUMBER: 49

✓ LOCATION: 248 East Avenue A, Jerome, Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: W. Pauline Wiley  
128 Blair Drive  
Twin Falls, ID 83301

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Jerome, 7.5 minutes

ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Schmerschall House and the property on which it stands, Lot 30, Block 83, Jerome Townsite. Legal description on file at Jerome County Courthouse, Jerome, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/703480/4732965

DATE OR PERIOD: 1917

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: H. T. Pugh

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local

CONDITION: excellent, altered, original site

DESCRIPTION:

This one and one half story lava rock house is 28 by 48 feet. The front, the shorter side, faces south. It has composition shingles on its hipped roof. There is a shallow hipped roofed dormer centered on the front above the full, inset porch. There are two fixed, horizontal eight-paned windows in the dormer. On each corner of the house and at the corners of the dormer roof the rafter ends are cut in a decorative curvilinear design. The random rubble walls of light brown and grayish lava have wide, slightly indented joints of darkened, brushed mortar. There are two tall interior brick chimneys with corbelled caps. The porch has three lava pedestals with concrete caps supporting square wooden pillars painted white. Two pillars flank the entrance to the porch offset to the left. The south-east corner has three pillars. The wooden-floored porch also has a white wooden balustrade. The concrete stoop extending from the porch has lava side walls with a concrete cap. The front door has eighteen panes of beveled glass. The flush concrete lintels above door and window openings are about twelve inches wide and are inset into the stone about six inches on each end. The unpainted concrete is medium gray in color. The four-inch wide lug sills are sloping. The double-hung double and tripartite windows have one or two vertical panes on the bottom and from three to sixteen small panes at the top. A shed roof extends from the edge of the roof on the back to cover an outset frame porch that is offset to the left.

#### SIGNIFICANCE:

This house is significant as one of the earliest lava rock buildings built within the city limits of Jerome and as an example of Colonial/bungaloid design. The newspaper commented "This house is unique as a town residence as it is built of lava rock and is as substantial as a fortress." (North Side News, November 22, 1917) H. T. Pugh, master mason, built the house for Dr. John F. Schmerschall, a Jerome physician. His stature in the community and the attractiveness of his residence probably influenced the building of two other lava rock residences nearby. This house shows classical influences through roof type, decorative windows, and porch balustrades, but is moving toward the bungalow style in the centered dormer, lower height, and exposed rafters. It shows the excellent craftsmanship of the mason in the careful selection of stones, original brushed mortar still in good condition, and fine grained, carefully formed concrete details. The small unobtrusive frame addition on the rear was added not long after the house was built to protect the kitchen door from the weather.

#### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

North Side News (Jerome). November 22, 1917; August 1, 1918.