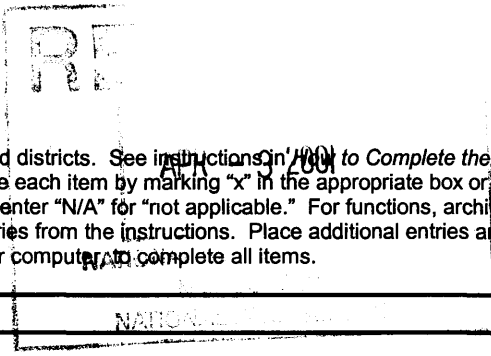


**United States Department of the Interior
Registration Form**

496



This form is for use in nomination or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 1001 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 Sea Lyft

other name/site number Wills/Shaw Cottage

2. Location

street & number 702 "D" Street

___ not for publication

city or town Gearhart

___ vicinity

state Oregon

code

OR

county Clatsop

code

007

zip code 97138

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hamrick

March 26, 2001

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO

Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or 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 into 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): ___

Stephen R. Jay
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action
11/14/01

Sea Lyft
Name of Property

Clatsop County, Oregon
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	1	1
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		
			buildings
			sites
			structures
			objects
		1	1
			Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
House - Single Dwelling	House - Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
Vernacular - Queen Anne	foundation Stone & concrete
	walls Vertical board and batten, lapped siding, & wood shingle
	roof Composition shingle
	other

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

See continuation sheets.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 1

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

SETTING

The summer cottage, "Sea Lyft," or Wills/Shaw House is located at 702 "D" Street, Gearhart, Oregon. The original address was 202 10th Street, on the first map of Gearhart Park. Laid out and recorded in August 1890, by M. J. Kinney. The "Sea Lyft" property is bounded on the south side by "D" street (originally 10th street), and on the west side by the Ridgepath. The site is 100' X 100" consisting of two 50' X 100' lots. The property slopes gradually from the west (Ridgepath) to the east. The cottage was constructed about twenty feet from the Ridgepath, and close to 10th street, with the front door and wrap-around porch positioned to give easy communication with persons walking along the Ridgepath, as well as along 10th Street, (now "D" Street.)

The property has numerous trees and low shrubs. Trees are mostly large Spruce, with some coastal Pines. There are numerous growths of red huckleberries, as well as salal and sword fern.

EXTERIOR

A document, written in 1965 by Mrs. H. M. Shaw (granddaughter of Mrs. Jacob Wills) states the property on which "Sea Lyft" was later built, was purchased by Mrs. Jacob (Rebecca) Wills in the fall of 1891. The Wills family built a small shed, which served as a dining room and kitchen in the summertime, and a storage place in the winter. Each summer, from 1892 to 1897, the Wills family traveled from Portland to Gearhart by train, and tented on the property. Mrs. Wills then drew up plans for the house, which was constructed in time for occupancy in the summer of 1898. The house was a typical one and a half story summer-only cottage, built on post and beams, the posts resting on large stones about 18" in diameter and 8 or 9 " thick, hauled to Gearhart from the Seaside cove area. Over the years those foundation stones settled into the ground at slightly different rates. It finally became necessary in 1987 to jack up the entire cottage and install a full concrete and cement block foundation.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 2

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

Walls are single board and batten (no studs) with joists for the upstairs area resting on a 2x6 nailed to the wallboards. Joists are surfaced 2 x 8's on approximately 24" centers, and are exposed. There is no sub-flooring. The floors are 1x4 tongue and groove flooring. The first floor ceiling at 9'-6" consists of the flooring for the second floor rooms. An Opal iron stove in the living room, and a wood burning kitchen cook-stove provided heating. Both stoves were vented through a ceramic tile chimney. Electric service to the cottage consisted of a 20-amp box, with knob-and-tube wiring to each room, which had a single outlet - one wire dropping from the center of the ceiling. Date of installation of electric service is unknown. The electric service was upgraded in 1965 to a 100-amp box, with standard outlets for each room, plus outlets for a hot water heater and for a small electric stove. Since the wires had to be run on the wall surface, wires were encased in redwood strips routed out for space to hold the wires. Redwood matches the unfinished wood of the living and dining rooms, and delivers the electric wires in an unobtrusive manner.

When piped water became available in about 1908, several major changes were made to "Sea Lyft." A six-foot addition across the back (east side) of the house made space for a bathroom and back porch. A wrap-around front porch was added to the SW corner of the house, and the original front porch was converted into an entry vestibule. Horizontal exterior siding was added to the north, west, and south sides of the cottage, while interior walls of the living room, dining room and vestibule were covered with vertical 1X4, V grooved finished wood. No wax, or stain, or finish of any kind has been applied to those interior walls.

The roof of the cottage is steep, 45 degrees, (1 to 1). Cedar shingles were used until 1990, when the cottage was re-shingled with fire-resistant composition shingles, but with a pattern that appears similar to regular shingles.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 3

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

(Non-contributing) A two-car garage was constructed in 1940 on the southeast portion of the property. Neighbors along the north side of the lot built a wood picket fence. At some early date, an iron rod was driven to mark the southeast corner of the property. That rod is still in place.

INTERIOR

The first floor consists of the Vestibule, Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, and Bathroom. Vestibule, living room and dining room are completed with unfinished, vertical tongue and groove 1"x4" spruce boards. Remaining interior walls are finished the same, yet are painted. Windows from the vestibule face west toward the Ridgepath. Double windows from the living room face west toward the Ridgepath, and a single window faces north to the back yard area. The dining room has doors to the kitchen, bathroom, and a folding door for the closet that is under the stairway. Dining room windows face the street to the south. The bathroom contains the original small claw foot bathtub, toilet bowl, and wall sink. A shower bath accessible from the bathroom was installed on part of the back porch in 1971. The kitchen originally contained a wood stove that was in use until 1999. The kitchen contains a wealth of old utensils displayed on the wall, but the old wood stove has been replaced with a small electric range. Interiors of the bathroom and kitchen are painted board and batten walls.

There are three bedrooms and a half-bath on the second floor. Roof rafters and sheathing boards (upon which roofing shingles are nailed) are exposed in the bedrooms. North or south sidewalls of the bedrooms raise about three and a half feet, and then follow the slope of the roof (45 degrees) until reaching ceiling level.

All windows and doors are the originals. Windows are double hung four over four, with almost all of the original glass panes still in place. All exterior and interior doors have the original doorknobs and

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 4

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

hardware in usable condition. Exterior doors have metal knobs. Other first floor doors have black porcelain knobs. Second floor doors have white porcelain knobs.

There are no clothes closets. A free-standing coat rack is located in the vestibule. Each bedroom has a small wall-mounted shelf, or bracket, at the six-foot level, equipped with a short clothes rod to accept clothes hangers. Clothes may also be stacked on top of the shelf.

MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

When Grace and Howard Homer acquired "Sea Lyft" in 1965, the building was in need of tender loving care. When repair or improvement was contemplated, the Homers have been careful to do so in keeping with the appearance and ambiance of the original building. Over \$15,000 worth of improvements, maintenance and repairs have been provided since 1965:

1965 - Installation of 100-watt electrical service, and house completely rewired.

1967 - New stainless steel chimney installed for living room stove.

1971 - Made and installed filigree on porch and roof peak to match original picture. Installed shower bath as part of the bathroom.

1974 - Made and installed doors for the china cupboard. Handrail on the stairs.

1975 - Installed half-bathroom on second floor.

1978 - Constructed deck near northeast corner of house. (Not attached to house)

1981 - Repainted entire house.

1982 - Installed wall to wall carpet. New floor covering in kitchen and bathroom.

1987 - Installed full concrete foundation for entire building.

1990 - Reshingled with fire-proof composition shingles.

1991 - Repainted entire house.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7

Page 5

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

1996 - Replaced flooring on front porch.

1999 - Installed gas furnace & water heater.

Sea Lyft
Name of Property

Clatsop County, Oregon
County and State

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 has the potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Settlement

Social History

Period of Significance

c.1898-1940

Significant Dates

c. 1898

1908

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographic 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 Building Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of Repository:

Howard & Grace Horner

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GEARHART

Settlement and Railroads (1849 to 1890)

Philip Gearhart, eponymous father of the town, set out from Independence, Missouri, with his family in 1848 and arrived in Oregon City in October of that year. Several weeks later he established his household in Clatsop Plains, at first renting a log cabin. Farmers had begun to settle the Clatsop Plains to some extent (primarily at the north end), the first of whom was Solomon Smith, who had arrived in 1832 and had married the daughter of Cobaway, chief of the Clatsops. In 1851, Gearhart bought a squatter's right in the south Plains for a thousand dollars, using it to create a 640-acre donation land claim; the U.S. patent was granted in 1874. Gearhart increased his holdings by 537 acres in 1859 through purchase from Obadiah C. Motley, and again in 1863 by 571 acres purchased from Jefferson J. Louk. The entire parcel encompassed all of what is now called Gearhart, as well as a portion of Seaside across the estuary. Philip Gearhart built a home and farm for his family near Marlan's gristmill by Mill Creek, in a sheltered area north and east of the Necanicum estuary.

South of Clatsop Plains, on the far side of the Necanicum estuary, a settlement known first as "Clatsop Beach," then (after 1882) as "Sea Side," had been growing steadily since the 1850s. There, economic activity based on local resources (farming, logging, fishing, and canning) was supplemented during the summer season by resort accommodations-hotels, taverns, and amusement facilities. To reach Seaside, however, tourists who had made the eight-hour trip by sternwheeler from Portland were required to board a stagecoach at Fort Clatsop and endure a rugged ride through the Lewis and Clark valley, catching their first glimpse of the ocean as they emerged from the hills behind the coastal town. It was an entrepreneur from Astoria, Marshall Kinney, who saw the potential for profit if better transportation were provided, not only to Seaside, but to a new destination Kinney envisioned on the Gearhart estate in south Clatsop Plains.

No stranger to the development game, Marshall Kinney had platted a good number of building lots in Astoria and "New Astoria" (modern Hammond) in the 1880s. He ran a profitable sawmill in Astoria. His major profits, however, had come primarily from the cannery business, in which he had been engaged since the early

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

'70s. His was the second biggest cannery in Astoria; he had built up enough capital to look for a really major investment.

A major opportunity was seized when Kinney staked his capital to become an incorporator, with six others, of the Astoria and South Coast Railway, of which D. K. Warren (after whom Warrenton was named) became the first president in 1888. The aim of the incorporators was to secure capital for financing a route to Portland which would proceed southward to the Nehalem River, then eastward toward Forest Grove. What Kinney really cared about was the first leg of the route, the track down through Clatsop Plains to Seaside. And in fact that was the only part of the project ever to be completed.

His trips to Seaside to supervise his new cannery operation by Marian's mill (which had been abandoned in the late '70s) brought him into viewing distance of the Gearhart place; he reached it by an easy walk northward along an ancient foredune—the very dune ridge on which the railroad track would soon be laid. John Gearhart, Philip Gearhart's son and heir, still held most of his father's almost 1800 acres. In August of 1888 John accepted Marshall's offer of \$7000 for 873-acres, the bulk of the Gearhart farm, not including the farmhouse and a few family holdings.

Kinney then turned around and deeded to the Astoria and South Coast Railway Co., in which he himself was a major stakeholder, a strip of land 30 feet wide along the old dune ridge traversing, from north to south, the entire length of the Gearhart property, provided that the Company construct a railroad from Astoria to or near Sea Side, and that the construction begin within six months from the date hereof [Dec. 21, 1888], and that within two years the road should be completed. Right on schedule, the first spike was driven at Skipanon landing on May 11, 1889, and by the spring of 1890 the 15.6 miles of track to Seaside had been laid. There were thirteen flag stops along the way from Warrenton. Gearhart station was the ninth.

The Kinney Era (1890-1905)

The planners and platters of Gearhart Park incorporated that traditional thoroughfare into their development scheme in 1890. Marshall and Narcissa Kinney, planning an inspirational "wilderness" park, tried to include as many of the natural features of the place as possible. It was the first planned coastal resort community in the state of Oregon, and it was to provide a sharp contrast with the unplanned development of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

rowdy Seaside. The Kinney plat of September 11, 1890 embraced roughly the area now bounded by Cottage Avenue on the west, Railroad Avenue on the east, Fifth Street on the north, and F Street on the south. The Ridge Path was enlisted as a sort of *grande promenade* running from north to south through the center of a carefully platted residential area between Cottage Avenue and Neacoxie Creek. Assigned a width of 25 feet, the Ridge Path was dedicated in the original plat of 1890 as a pedestrian rather than a vehicular throughway, to be used for foot travel only. The plat did not extend west of Cottage Avenue: the dune meadows were to be left unspoiled.

First to be constructed in 1890-91 were the essential Park buildings—the railroad depot, the grand hotel on the Ridge Path with its livery stable, and the auditorium. Elegant residences for Kinney and his brothers followed within the next two to three years.

Walking or driving the surrey eastward from their mansion, Marshall and Narcissa could access the cribbed wooden bridge which spanned the Neacoxie and led to the institutional building which, according to Narcissa's plan, would be a major factor in attracting desirable clientele to Gearhart Park: the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle (CLSC) auditorium. Situated in the midst of a 200-acre forest park, the "Chautauqua house" provided regular entertainment on summer evenings for hotel guests and new Gearhart residents, many of whom could not afford the hotel and lived in tents while their cottages were being built. As in 400 other "Chautauquas" nationwide, musical soirees and dance concerts were featured attractions, along with fiery orators and preachers of the day.

The planned contrast with Seaside quickly came to the public notice. The cultured Chautauqua, together with the image of the entire Park, were touted to lure a very different sort of tourist and summer resident from the sort attracted to the more citified amusements and accommodations of Seaside. Kinney fully expected to rival all competition with his Gearhart Park. He was right: by the time he sold out his interests to Theodore Kruse in 1905, hundreds of Gearhart Park lots had been purchased.

New living quarters, from humble log cabins (and numerous tents) to more elegant structures, began to appear throughout platted sections of the Park. Gearhart Park was meant to appeal not to an economic elite, but to a cultural elite. Not everyone who appreciated the amenities of Gearhart could afford an expensive lot and an expensive house upon it; the Kinney's made low-priced lots available, and placed no restrictions on the type of structure that could be built. Some summer residents camped for years in a tent while building their

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

own cottage. Even after completing the beach house, they often drew water from neighbors' wells and read by kerosene lamps, obviating the cost of plumbing and electricity.

After Kinney's example, the earliest seasonal homes were built along the Ridge Path. These were generally more modest structures than those built subsequently along Cottage Avenue, the westernmost thoroughfare. But whether their owners were rich or poor, the houses that sprang up in Gearhart had at least one thing in common: they were all "beach cottages," and therefore radically different from the family home in the city.

In the Kinney's' original vision, the dunes west of Cottage Avenue were to be left unspoiled as an essential part of the "park" landscape, the wilderness setting that characterized their resort community. The new century altered that vision—at least in Marshall's case. Shortly after 1900, he began to turn the dune landscape to a new recreational purpose, a nine-hole golf course. In so doing, he caused a major and irrevocable shift of focus in Gearhart Park. The shift was to the west, and would be permanent. The earlier dream of promenades through stately spruce groves was fading. From now on, golf would be the mainstay of Gearhart's survival as a destination resort.

By the end of 1902, a golf club had formed. The Gearhart Golf Links, laid out west of, and alongside of, Cottage Avenue, and taking off in a northerly direction from (current) Pacific Way, was born. A nine-hole course at first it had expanded to eighteen holes by 1915, doubling its size to 100 acres. Even before that expansion, the course had been dubbed "the finest in America" by a golf expert (at least according to the 1910 Gearhart Park brochure), and several tournaments were being booked.

The Era of Exuberance: Kruse and Taylor (1905 to 1918)

Theodore Kruse was a very successful Portland restaurateur and caterer. He had major interests in Gearhart going back to 1898, when Marshall Kinney had first hired him as summer manager for the Gearhart Park Hotel. Kruse was no realtor, but he had a keen sense of what the Lewis and Clark Exposition, an international trade fair held in northwest Portland in 1905, portended for growth and development. He realized that its impact would be statewide, inaugurating a new wave of affluent immigration. The effects would be felt not just in the cities, but also in the resort towns to which the new population would flock. In 1906, Theodore

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

Kruse accomplished the purchase not only of the Gearhart Hotel that he knew so well, but also of Gearhart Park in its entirety.

Kruse had no interest in preserving the old western boundary of Gearhart Park. After all, Kinney had already violated it with his golf course development, and there was money to be made in ocean views. On October 2, 1905, the new owner of Gearhart Park registered "Kruse's First Addition to Gearhart Park" with the Clatsop County Clerk in Astoria. The new plat represented a clean break with tradition: it established over a hundred residential building lots in the ocean dunes between what are now D Street and Fifth Street. In their midst stood a huge open space, the site of a hotelkeeper's dream. Kruse's Beach Hotel was to make Gearhart a resort of unparalleled elegance.

By 1906 the first bungalows and Dutch colonial houses had appeared on high-priced lots up on the foredune, where none had ventured to build before. Construction of the Beach Hotel began soon after Theodore Kruse had acquired ownership of the Park. The building was almost complete by the summer of 1908 just in time for the national financial crisis that paralyzed the banking system and made money tight for the next three years; Kruse found it impossible to finance the finishing touches (furniture, etc.).

The new hotel stood empty until March of 1910, when the Ruth Trust Company, headed by O. W. Taylor (and possibly abetted by the Hill transportation interests), took over all of Gearhart Park. The work of completing Kruse's grand hotel commenced immediately. On Thursday, June 9, 1910, it was opened to the public; a "grand initiatory event" was held on Saturday, June 18.

The new Gearhart hotel was a proud and unparalleled edifice. For the five years of its existence, it created a huge local industry in Gearhart. The old original Gearhart Park Hotel, the fine Queen Anne-style building on the Ridge Path, was demoted to a residence for the staff of Kruse's hotel and renamed "The Neacoxie." In 1913, it burned to the ground.

Under Taylor's management, the entire Park (and not just the ocean front, as with Kruse) was carefully groomed both for the tourist crowd and for the seasonal residents. Even the lowest-priced parcels of land had grown more valuable: in 1910, the minimum price of a 50' x 100' lot was two hundred dollars. Taylor recruited the auditorium and the livery stable (which was no longer relevant for the hotel on the ocean front) for community events like the Clatsop County fair.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

In 1911, managers of the Gearhart Park Corporation, in collaboration with the Chicago Managers Association, devised a new promotional use for the auditorium—a 21-day festival dubbed the "Gearhart Chautauqua." The auditorium continued to be used for "Gearhart Chautauquas" at least through 1912; in 1916, we find it functioning as, of all things, a summer movie house; but by 1920 it had disappeared.

Against all expectation, Kruse's hotel itself was lost in a fire on December 19, 1915. Nor was the hotel the only structure lost to fire in that year. By 1915 many new cottages were built on both the oceanfront and in the older parts of town. In the month of September of that fateful year, three brand new summer homes burned. The mainstays of the original Gearhart Park project were gone—the Chautauqua house, the grand hotel even its grander successor on the ocean front. What remained, indestructible, was the golf course. As the popularity of golf increased, so did Gearhart's chances of survival as a destination resort. Gearhart east of Cottage Avenue slipped into a shaded slumber.

The First World War interrupted any thoughts of constructing a new Gearhart Hotel. O. W. Taylor finally began to plan and build a third hotel soon after the end of World War 1. Construction began in 1920. A financial panic intervened, and the Portland merchants Julius Meier and Aaron Frank financed its delayed completion. It was finally opened in 1923, a magnificently gabled structure. But it stood beyond the limits, and beyond the reach, of a new Gearhart which was no longer a resort park, but a municipal corporation in its own right, with a mayor and city council who were not wealthy out-of-town speculators and developers, but local year-round residents who worked for a living with their hands. A political sea change had taken place with the birth of the City of Gearhart in 1918.

City of Gearhart (1918 to 1950)

It has been widely speculated that the motive for incorporation was a desire to protect Gearhart's assets from further disastrous winter fires. When the first hotel caught fire in 1913, the Seaside Volunteer Fire Department hauled hose carts to the blaze, but found that there were no hydrants in Gearhart. Again, in 1915, arriving to fight the fire at the Kruse hotel, the same fire department found that its hose connections would not fit the Gearhart outlets. Only through a municipal government could the permanent residents of Gearhart levy taxes to support their own fire department, ensure a dependable water supply, and carry out any other measures

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

necessary to the public peace, health, safety, and welfare. By late 1917, after 25 permanent residents of Gearhart Park had signed a petition for incorporation, a special election was set for January 28 of the new year. After a favorable vote, the provisional city council met on February 4 to organize a government for the City of Gearhart. The first mayor was P. A. Lee. Significantly, one of the earliest actions of the new government was to order the installation of fifty electric street lamps.

In the 1920s the cultural focus now shifted to the north and west-to the expanded golf course, and to the splendid new hotel which, for a variety of reasons, was built just outside the city limits. A mufti-gabled architectural marvel in three stories, it had been designed by Portland architect Morris H. Whitehouse. Like its short-lived predecessor, it stood proudly on the ocean front, and adjacent to the golf course; but the new hotel was relocated to the north, beyond the regulatory reach of City Hall. O. W. Taylor, successor to Kinney and Kruse, found this convenient, since he owned the land on which the hotel was built.

Economically speaking, the times that followed were a roller coaster ride into the great crash that ended the twenties. Fancy ocean front houses sometimes sold for taxes. Humbler cottages, however, continued to be built through the 1920s for both seasonal and permanent residents. Moving structures from one location to another allowed additional lots to be developed. An annex, which survived the fire of the first Gearhart Park Hotel, was moved to a nearby lot to become a single-family residence. Other structural transfers took place in the same neighborhood, thus clearing land for commercial development, or for bigger, more modern dwellings. On the oceanfront a large residence was moved off the foredune to a more sheltered location across the street.

After the crash of 1929, little or no development took place in the Gearhart area. While the Hotel Gearhart continued to operate as a destination resort for those who could still afford it, the rest of Gearhart became, for most of the year, a ghost town. The cost of owning a second home was now prohibitive, as a result, many cottages and bungalows were taken by the County in lieu of taxes.

During the Depression, and especially through the winter months, the destitute often sought out areas like Clatsop County where plentiful natural resources and a temperate climate offered a chance at survival. Food was always there for those who could hunt and fish. The dangerous job of felling timber was still available to the able-bodied, and a few tourist establishments like the Hotel Gearhart provided low-wage employment opportunities.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

As a virtually abandoned resort town, Gearhart offered housing opportunities to entire families of squatters who were willing to carry water to "their" cottages and to read by kerosene lamps. Seasonal homeowners who retained their Gearhart properties sometimes allowed poorer friends and relatives to spend the winter in the family cottage; a bit of work on the old place (a new roof, a garage, etc.) was all the rent that was expected. In 1932 the City Council voted to offer city work to those who were unable to pay their water bills. The Gearhart school continued to operate, affording a rudimentary education even to squatters' children.

The Depression caused a significant increase in the permanent population, while the seasonal population declined owing to the difficulty of maintaining second-home ownership. The year-round population had remained steady between 1920 (pop. 127) and 1930 (pop. 125), but by 1940 it had risen to 319 souls. The influx of permanent residents may have contributed to the preservation of many historic structures: a house that is occupied year-round is less vulnerable to fire and vandalism, which had always been problems in Gearhart during the winter months.

During the Depression, local functions that promoted the survival of the tourist industry west of Cottage Avenue included conventions golf tournaments, and equestrian events (first proposed by Aaron Frank in the 1920's). Repeal of Prohibition (1933) finally permitted the hotel to profit legally from the sale of liquor. However, from the mid- to the late thirties the Gearhart Hotel operated at a loss. It was purchased, together with the golf course, by Barney Lucas in 1939, who then sold the hotel separately to a Portland consortium headed by George Braley of the automobile dealership Braley & Graham. In 1943 Marshall Leathers and John Osburn purchased the hotel in anticipation of an influx of families who would be visiting wounded veterans at a proposed naval hospital (never constructed), and would need accommodation during their visits.

During the much longer years of World War II, coastal Clatsop County, like the rest of the west coast, was considered vulnerable to attack from the Japanese and other enemy powers. As a beach community, Gearhart played its part in protecting the shore from hostile incursions. The City Attorney, Tom Chave, was granted leave to join the Civilian Air Patrol. The Coast Guard (then under the Navy Department) took over the old stable (Nicol's Riding Academy) to house horses used during a nightly mounted beach patrol. Trained Coast Guard dogs often accompanied those patrols; they were kept in kennels just north of the stable. Some officers were housed in the Ocean House at the head of Pacific Way, where the beach entrance was closed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

The war industries of the World War II era (the Astoria shipyard, Fort Stevens, Camp Clatsop) brought the ratio of seasonal to permanent residents in Gearhart down to an all-time low of 4 to 6, a ratio which sustained itself well past 1950. The end of the war had not meant a reduction in Gearhart's permanent population. Many who had come to work in war-related industries found other employment in Clatsop County, mainly Seaside and Astoria. More and more, Gearhart became what it was to be for another three decades: a "bedroom community" of primarily year-round residents who worked in the still prosperous local industries, timber and fishing above all, with tourism and government (including education) not far behind.

THE WILLS/SHAW HOUSE

In 1872 Rebecca Stevenson Kern's first husband, John T. Kerns, who was a mercantile operator and steamship captain, died. In 1881 Rebecca Kerns married Jacob Wills. Rebecca Stevenson Wills bought the property on which this house stands in September 1891 from Edward Z. Ferguson (Deed 22/640). Ferguson, an Astoria resident, distinguished himself as deputy collector of customs (1885-1890) and organizer, then secretary and manager, of the Abstract, Title & Trust Company. He owned large and valuable real estate in and around Astoria, dealing largely in timberlands. He died in Seaside in 1917.

According to a Gearhart Homeowners Association document, Rebecca Wills and her five children (Amy, Della, Nellie, and twin sons William and Wellard) from Rebecca's previous marriage to John Kerns, camped on this site for several summers after buying the property in 1891 and before building their summer cottage around 1898. Rebecca Kerns Wills is believed to have drawn up plans for the existing house. '

Rebecca's second husband, Jacob Wills, who died in April 1891, was an early settler and mill owner in the former Willsburg and present Eastmoreland neighborhoods of Portland. Born to George and Sarah Wills on December 3, 1826, he married Lorana Ellen Bozarth in 1849, the year after the Wills family came overland to Oregon. Jacob and Lorana Wills settled on a 534-acre donation land claim just north of his parents' claim, in the present Eastmoreland area. The couple parented eleven children. Jacob, with his father George Wills, operated a sawmill on nearby Johnson Creek until around 1888. He then turned his attention to the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 10

Property Name Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Location Clatsop Co., OR

manufacture of brick. Shortly before his death caused by heart failure in April 1891, Jacob sold his brick business to two of his sons. Around the same time, he also sold part of the land in his original donation land claim. The money from the sale of this property may have allowed Rebecca Wills, his second wife, to purchase this Gearhart property, which became known as "Sea Lyft" (meaning "sea air" in old English).

Rebecca Wills passed "Sea Lyft" along to her sons William and Wellard in 1927 (Deed 122/221 and Deed 134/351). William W. Kerns was born in Portland in 1866. At a young age he learned the printing trade and became a partner in the James Printing Company. In 1912 the firm became James, Kerns and Abbott (later Abbott, Kerns & Bell Company). He died in 1958.

Wellard Kerns bought "Sea Lyft" from his brother, William, in 1934 (Deed 134/351). Wellard, in turn, passed the property along to his daughter, Bessie Kerns Shaw, and son, William Ronald Kerns (Deed 145/92).

Bessie and her husband Hanson Miles Shaw, along with their daughters, Dorothy (Berg) and Virginia, enjoyed summer vacations in the "Sea Lyft" cottage for many years. Bessie Kerns Shaw was active in the Oregon Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations for many years, serving as its treasurer for nine years. Hanson Miles Shaw, a native of Idaho who came to Oregon in 1902, worked for Fuller Paint Company from 1904 to 1952. Hanson died in 1967; Bessie died in 1975. The Shaws sold "Sea Lyft" in 1965 to Grace L. and Howard F. Homer (Deed 229/413), the current owners.

CONCLUSION

The Wills/Shaw House is historically significant because of its association with the development of Gearhart as a seaside community, and as a outstanding example of Vernacular seaside cottage construction with Queen Anne style detailing.

Sea Lyft
Name of Property

Clatsop County, Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. Zone 10 Easting 428995 Northing 5096655 3. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____
2. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____ 4. Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing _____

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Township 6N, Range 10W, Section 10. Clatsop County Map Number 10BC, Tax Lot Number 2900.

Boundary Justification

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

The boundary of the property consists of the current and historic tax lots associated with the resource.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title DR. HOWARD HORNER, with contextual information from Evans-Hatch and Associates, Inc.
organization _____ date May 2000
street & number 13101 SE Salmon Street telephone 503-254-0797
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97233

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

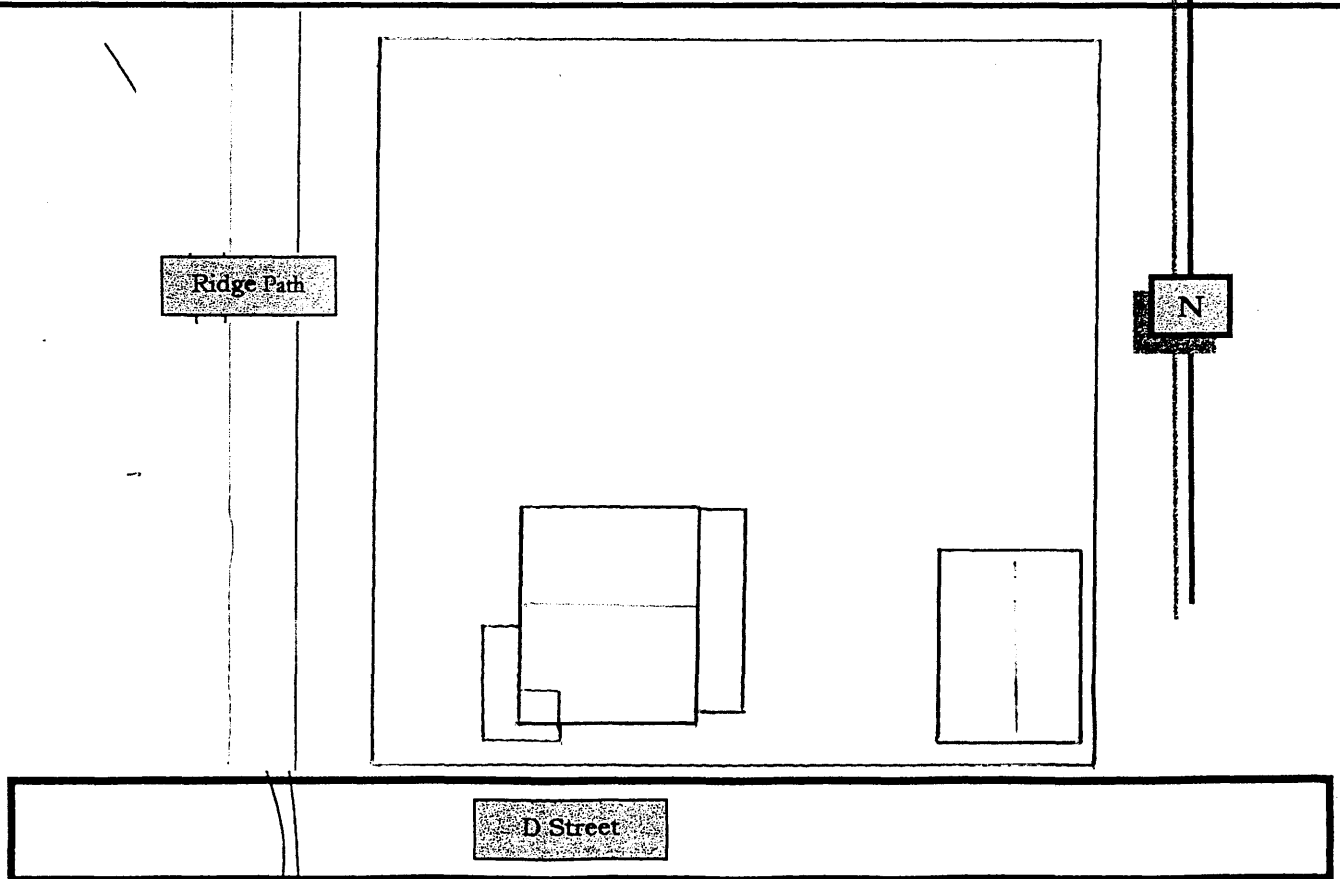
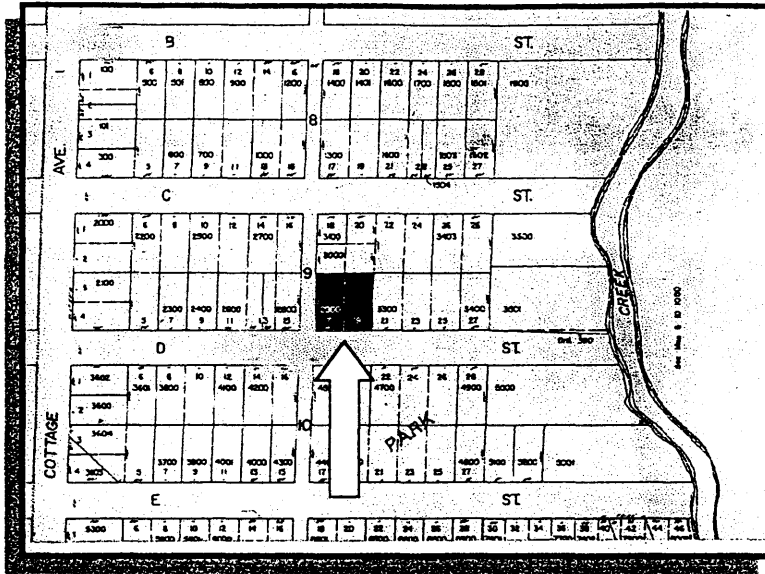
name/title DR. HOWARD AND GRACE HORNER
street & number 13101 SE Salmon Street telephone 503-254-0797
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97233

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 communications 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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

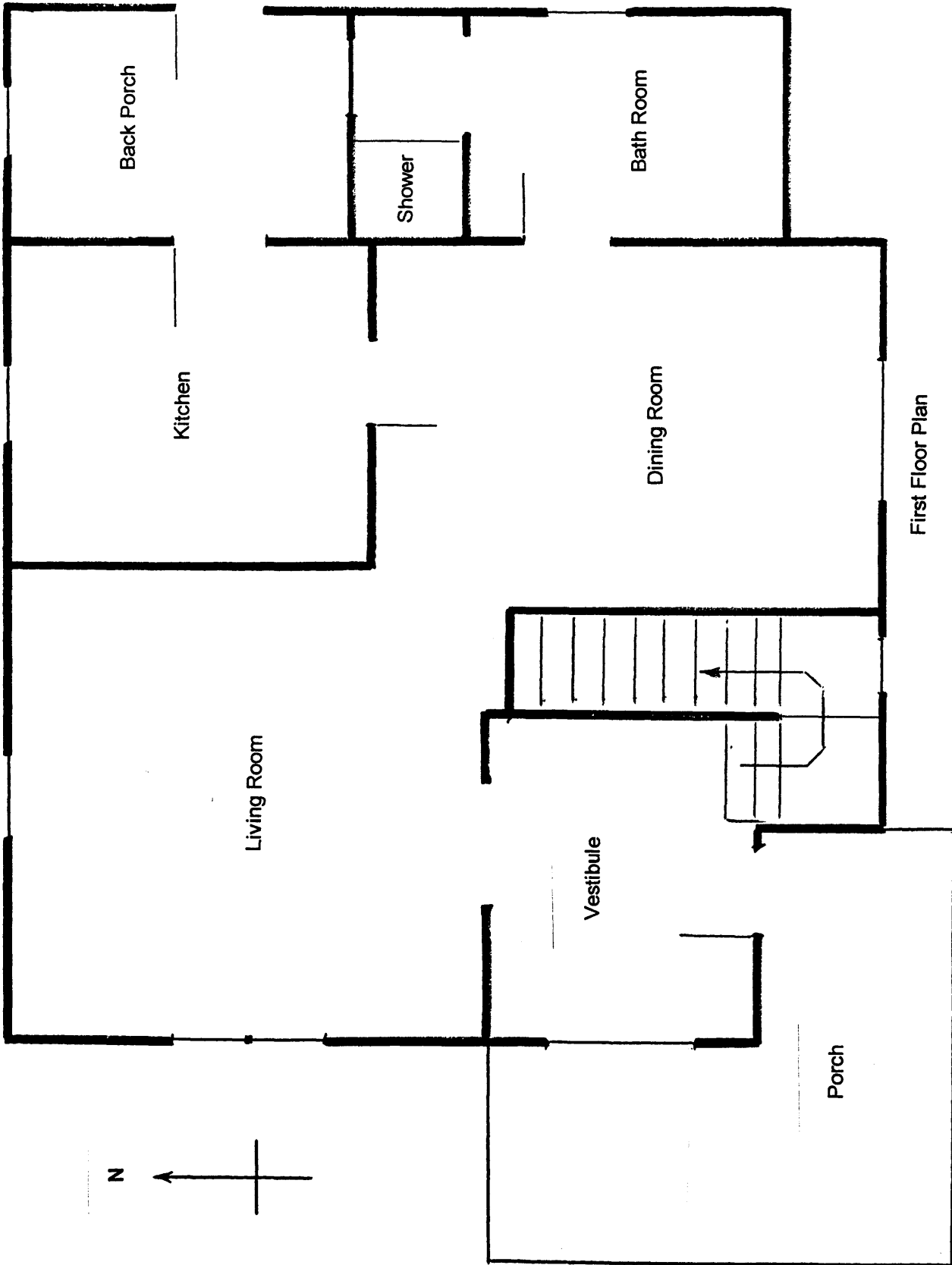
OREGON INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
 CLATSOP COUNTY (Gearhart)
 Page 3-B (Maps)

702 D Street



HISTORIC NAME: Wills/Shaw House (Sea Lyft)
ADDRESS: 702 D Street
 Gearhart, Oregon

MAP NO.: 10BC **TAX LOT NO.:** 2900
QUADRANGLE: Township/Range/Section
 6N 10W 10



N

Living Room

Kitchen

Back Porch

Vestibule

Porch

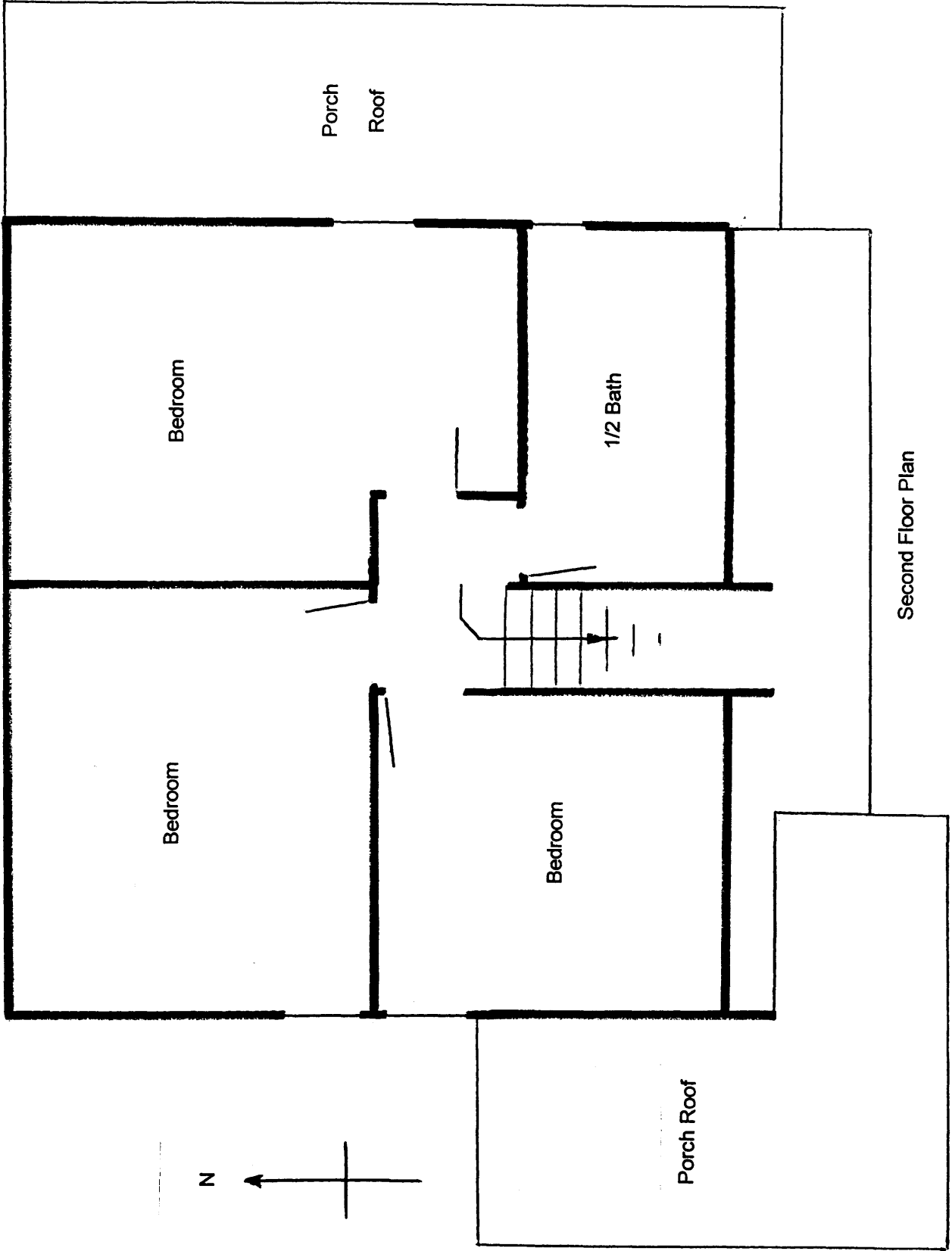
Dining Room

Shower

Bath Room

First Floor Plan

"Sea Lyft" 702 D Street, Gearhart, Oregon



Second Floor Plan

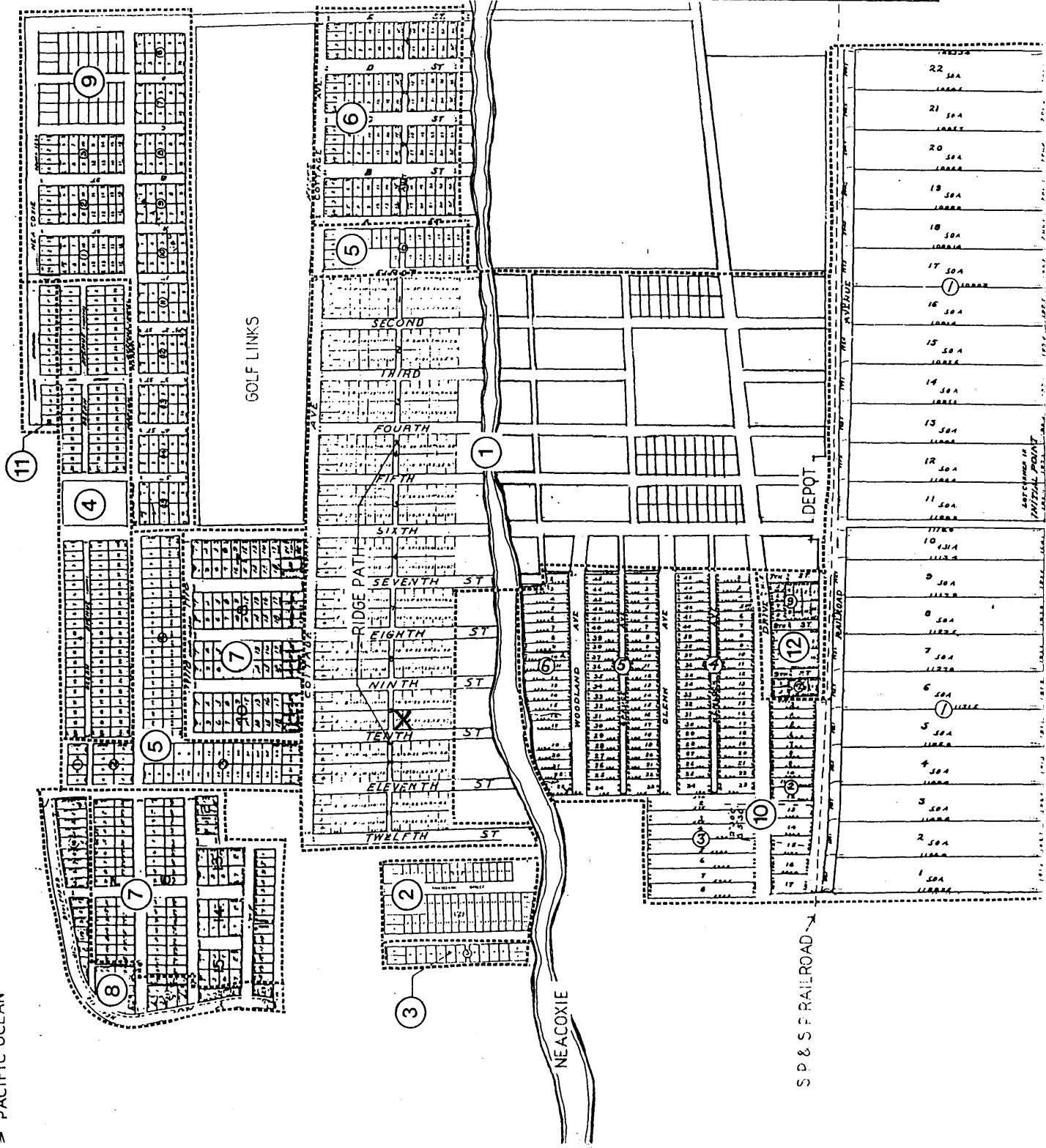
"Sea Lyft" 702 D Street, Gearhart, Oregon

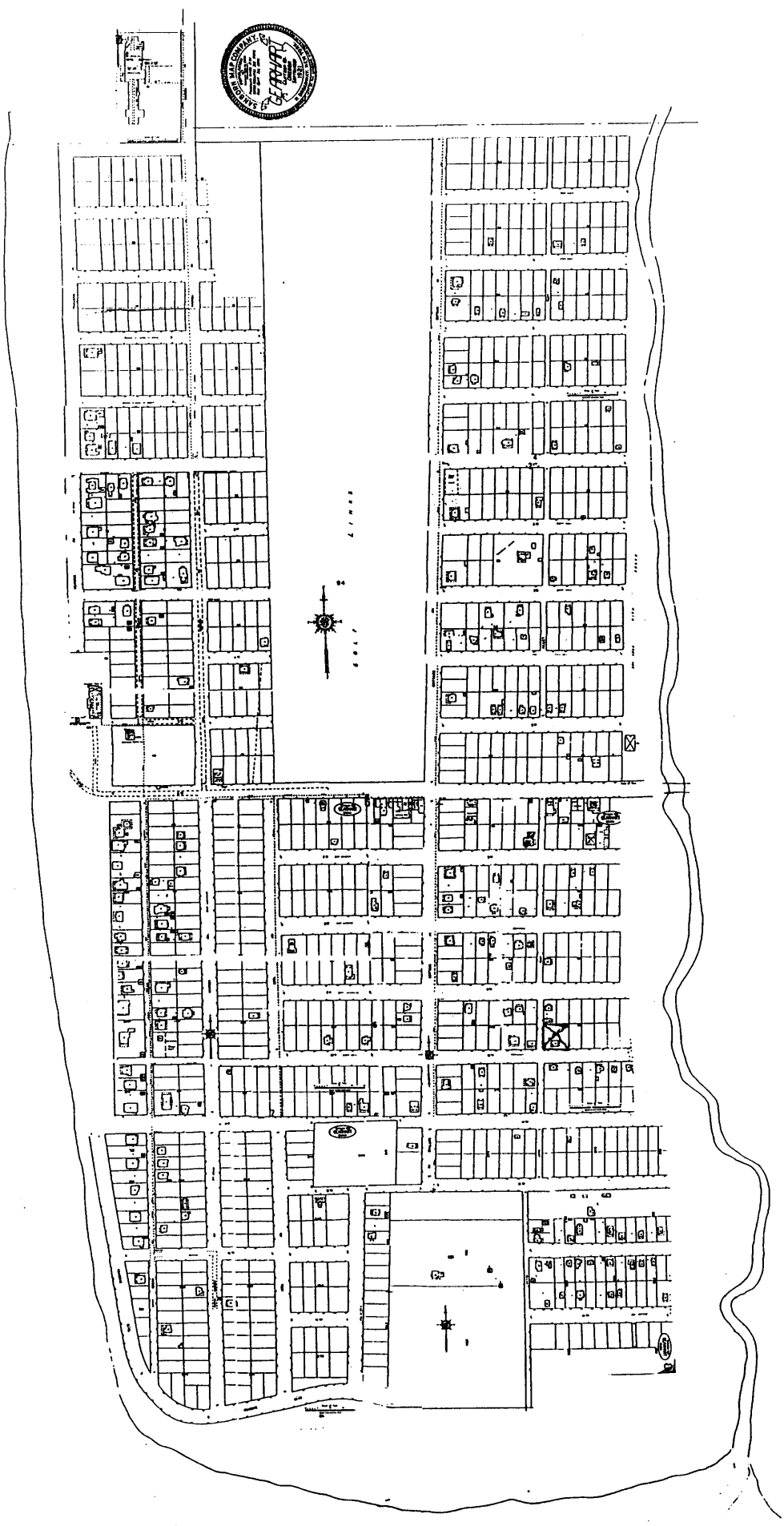
PACIFIC OCEAN

GEARHART PARK PLAT MAP, 1890-1917

LEGEND

- 1 GEARHART PARK
September 11, 1890
- 2 FIRST ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
May 24, 1895
- 3 FIRST ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
BLOCK 3 August 23, 1895
- 4 KRUSE'S FIRST ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
October 2, 1905
- 5 SECOND ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
January 16, 1907
- 6 THIRD ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
JULY 16, 1908
- 7 REDONDO ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
JULY 7, 1909
- 8 REDONDO ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
BLOCKS 15-23 May 25, 1910
- 9 OCEANSIDE ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
BLOCKS 1-15 JULY 9, 1910
- 10 WOODLAND PARK ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
BLOCKS 1-6 November 13, 1911
- 11 KRUSE'S FIRST ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK
LOTS 26-38 BLOCK 1 April 11, 1912
- 12 AMENDED PLAT OF WOODLAND PARK
ADDITION TO GEARHART PARK BLOCKS 1-15
April 15, 1916





GEARHART LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP, 1921

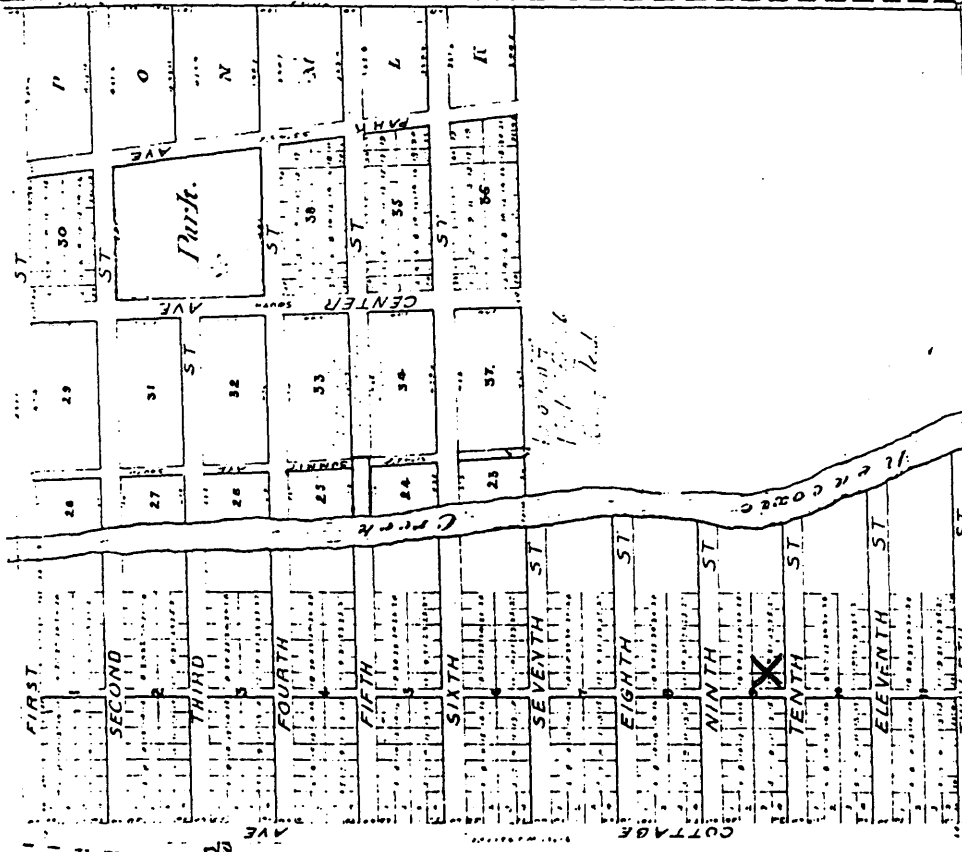
ORIGINAL 1890 PLAT OF GEARHART PARK

MAP GEARHART PARK

as laid out & recorded

by

M. J. Kinney
CLATSOP CO. OR.



Signed all maps by these persons: John W. Kinney and Harriette W. Kinney, his wife, do hereby certify and declare that the foregoing map is a true and correct copy of the original plat of Gearhart Park, as it is a full and complete plat of said Park and as we have laid out for, recorded, and as the same is so situated and located that the common corner of Section Three, Four, Five and Ten in Township Six North of Range Two west of the Willamette Meridian and in Clatsop County, Oregon, is a true and correct copy of said Plat, to-wit: 7 1/2 feet S. 8 1/2 W. from the North end corner of said Park a distance of 615.7 feet. That all divisions, distances and dimensions of or relative to said Park together with the names and number of all streets, blocks, and lots therein are true and correct as ascertained by reference to said map or plat. That we hereby reserve to ourselves here and assign all rights of way through the streets in said Park for Railroad and street, railway purposes and the purposes of conducting water and electric and gas through said Park or into the same. That subject to the limitations herein before mentioned, we hereby dedicate the street twenty feet in width running through blocks one to eleven inclusive of said Park, to the Public as a park-way or foot path, to be used for foot travel only, and all other streets in said Park, as in said plat designated, to the Public to remain free and open, by law or force, forever, within our hands and seal the 21st day of August 1890.

Witnessed by John Helms
W. R. Smith
M. J. Kinney
Harriette W. Kinney

State of Oregon } ss The certifier that on this 21st day of August 1890 before me the undersigned Notary Public in and for said County and State personally appeared M. J. Kinney and Harriette W. Kinney, his wife, who are to me well known to be the identical persons described in and who executed the within instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same freely and voluntarily and for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Notarial Seal the day and year last above written.

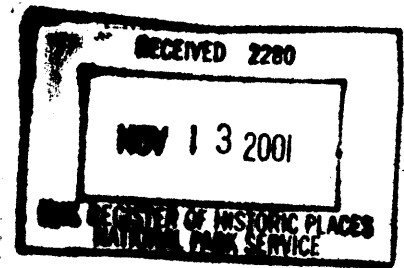
John H. Smith
Notary Public for Oregon.



Recorded Sept 11th 1891
J. J. ...

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**



Section number Photos

Page 1

Property Name & Location Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Cottage, Gearhart, Clatsop County, OR

1. Sea Lyft or Wills/Shaw Cottage, Gearhart
2. Clatsop County, Oregon
3. Dr. Howard Horner, Photographer
4. March 2000
5. Negatives retained by the owner

Photo 1: West Elevation

Photo 2: West Elevation detail

Photo 3: West Elevation porch detail

Photo 4: Southwest Corner, taken from "D" Street

Photo 5: South Elevation

Photo 6: Southeast Corner

Photo 7: Northeast Corner

Photo 8: East Elevation detail

Photo 9: East Elevation detail

Photo 10: North Elevation