

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington	
COUNTY: Whatcom	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
70-4-46	2002 4/3/70

1. NAME

COMMON:
Whatcom Museum of History and Art

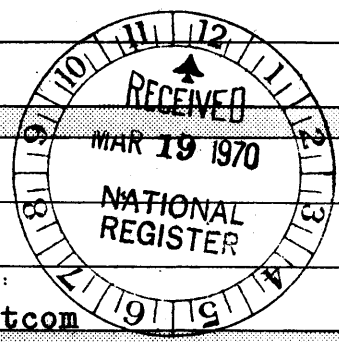
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Old City Hall

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
121 Prospect Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Bellingham, Was.

STATE: **Washington** CODE: **46** COUNTY: **Whatcom** CODE: **73**



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>		

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	Art-Culture	
Entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
City of Bellingham, Washington

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham, Washington** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **46**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Whatcom County Auditor's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:
Whatcom County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **46**

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **Building, four stories, 16,500 sq. ft.**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Replat of Central Whatcom

DATE OF SURVEY: **March 4, 1907** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
City Engineer's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:
City Hall

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **46**

STATE: **Washington**

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ENTRY NUMBER: **70-4-46** DATE: **2002 4/3/70**

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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building was completed in May, 1892, for use as a city hall. It was built on a sandstone ledge overlooking Bellingham Bay. The foundation is reinforced concrete and the main structure is red brick, with local Chuckanut sandstone trim. The roof was terne metal roof cladding over wood rafters and the present roof is a recent (1966) replacement of the original. The earlier laminated wood beams have been replaced with new structural steel beams and wood rafters during renovation began in 1966. The building has been found in sound condition by two groups of structural engineers. No bearing walls have been replaced, but some non-bearing walls have been removed in areas to allow for larger display galleries and installment of walk-in glass cases. Heating, plumbing, and electrical systems have been replaced with new materials. The basement and first floor have been completely renovated, using as much authentic material where possible, or with tasteful substitution of new materials. The center bell tower, which was destroyed in the fire of 1962, has not been replaced yet, but it is a future goal. The original hand-carved wood staircase, panellings, and moldings have been refinished. Period chandeliers have been installed, and modern display lighting is utilized. The second and third floor renovation awaits further funds from private and public sources. In October, 1966, Bellingham was presented the Annual Award of the Washington State Arts Commission for its efforts to preserve and restore the old City Hall, now called the Whatcom Museum of History and Art.

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

8. SIGNIFICANCE

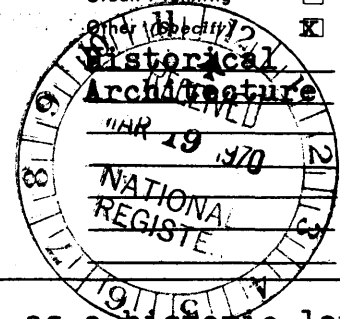
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Building completed May, 1892.**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> | Education <input type="checkbox"/> | Political <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> | Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic <input type="checkbox"/> | Industry <input type="checkbox"/> | Science <input type="checkbox"/> | Historical |
| Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> | Invention <input type="checkbox"/> | Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> | Architecture |
| Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> | MAR 19 1970 |
| Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> | Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater <input type="checkbox"/> | NATIONAL REGISTER |
| Communications <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Conservation <input type="checkbox"/> | Military <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| | Music <input type="checkbox"/> | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The significance of the old City Hall as a historic landmark is mainly as an architectural type and as a local heritage of our past. Built in 1892, during the last years of the Victorian era the building was in the center of the boom and bust times often common to newly settled territories of the United States. The first settlers had reached Bellingham Bay in 1852, and others followed soon after them. Alfred Lee was a late pioneer to this area, arriving in 1890. He established an architecture office, and began to design public and private buildings for the area, including the old City Hall, and some buildings of Western Washington State College in Bellingham, established as the Normal School in 1899. Bellingham was still a cluster of little towns, all seeking to outdo each other in growth and economic expansion. The western terminus of several intercontinental railroads had bypassed them, and the last of the gold rush miners had left for the Fraser River, British Columbia country. Coal, timber, and fishing were the remaining large industries in this area, and with the labor force they attracted, this was a raw town, experiencing waves of boom and bust with every rumor of new industrial interest. The construction of the City Hall was a major achievement during the "civilizing" of the area, and was the building where important plans were made concerning the future of this "Fourth Corner" of the State of Washington. (At present, it is one of the remaining few examples of the late Victorian public buildings that has been left in relatively original condition in this area.) It has been in operation as a public museum since the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mahlberg, Blanche. Story in "The Bellingham Herald",
Herald Publishing Company, Bellingham, Washington.
February 28, 1966.

Roth, Lottie Roeder, supervising editor. History of
Whatcom County, two volumes, with Volume One being
historical, and Volume Two being biographical.
Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, Chicago,
Illinois and Seattle, Washington, 1926.

(see Continuation Sheet)

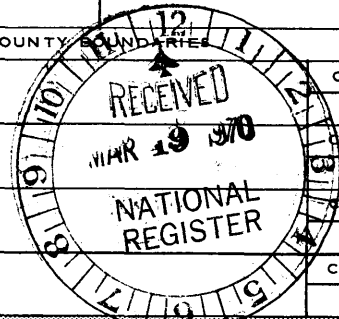
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 48 45 10	W 122 28 48	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

NO
DATA

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY under supervision of Susan H. L. Barrow, Liason Officer

NAME AND TITLE:
by: Charlotte V. Schneider, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Whatcom Museum of History and Art DATE: March 25, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:
121 Prospect Street

CITY OR TOWN: Bellingham STATE: Washington CODE: 46

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Charles H. Odegaard
Charles H. Odegaard

Title Director, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Date January 27, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest Allen Connally
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date APR 3 1970

ATTEST:
William J. Huntley
Keeper of The National Register

Date MAR 27 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Washington	
COUNTY	
Whatcom	
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70-4-46-0002	4/3/70

(Number all entries)

city fathers vacated it in 1939, and has also become a vital community center since the renovations began in 1966. (A fire in 1962 essentially closed down the building to the public for six years, but a determined group of friends kept the idea going, and renovation has reawakened the public interest in the history of our community.) The first public opening after renovation was in June of 1968, with the comprehensive exhibit of the "Arts of a Vanished Era", an account of the Pacific Northwest Coast's early inhabitants, the Indians. This show closed in December of 1968, with a total attendance of more than fifty-five thousand people, and a new show of the early white settlement of the "Fourth Corner" opened in January of this year. The next show of historic interest, scheduled to open late in 1969, will show the contribution of the early industries to the rapid growth of the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Bibliographical References Continued:

Steinbruek, Victor. Story in "The Seattle Post-Intelligencer", Seattle, Washington, April 10, 1966.

The Oregonian's Handbook of the Pacific Northwest, Oregonian Publishing Company, Portland, Oregon, 1894.

The Whatcom Museum of History and Art, a brochure prepared by the Director and Staff of the Museum, containing an article by Director Susan Barrow, published in the periodical, "Museum News", March, 1967.