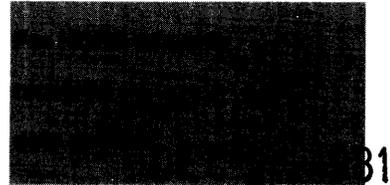


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Benson, Judge Henry L., House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 137 High Street ___ not for publication

city, town Klamath Falls ___ vicinity of congressional district second

state Oregon code 41 county Klamath code 035

3. Classification

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name L.H. Dearborn and Frances B. Dearborn

street & number 137 High Street

city, town Klamath Falls ___ vicinity of state 97601

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Klamath County Courthouse

street & number Main St.

city, town Klamath Falls state Oregon 97601

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The two-story frame house built in 1892 and occupied by Judge Henry L. Benson from 1898 to 1921, has a T-shaped plan composed of two symmetrical octagonal towers surmounted by conical roofs with bell-cast eaves forming the facade. A gable-roofed longitudinal stem, or ell extends from the center of the rear elevation. In later years a single-story addition with shingle roof and weatherboards to match the main volume was wrapped around the tree sides of the two-story ell. The towers are surmounted by "witches caps" and short wood spires with ball finials.

The house rests on a high basement lighted by multi-paned casement windows. The walls are concrete and ashlar. Above the ashlar ground course the basement story is finished with drop, or channel siding which is separated from the upper wall by a band of vertical tongue-and-groove siding set off by molding. First and second stories are sided with lapped weatherboards. Fenestration is regular, and window openings are found in each face of the octagonal volumes. Ground story openings are elongated, linteled openings with double hung window sash with one light over one and wide, flat architraves, or framements with cornice molding. Square second story openings also are fitted with double hung windows. Each angle of the towers is finished with flat corner boards. Soffits of the tower eaves are finished with tongue and groove boards. The current owners have laid a new roof of cedar shingles overall.

The entrance is centered in the outer wall of a narrow section between the towers and is approached by a flight of wood steps to a distinctively spindly porch on a lattice-skirted foundation. Its shallow gable roof is supported by rafters with decoratively-shaped ends, five plates and four tall, turned posts.

The peak of the SE gable end of the rear wing is visible above the section joining the two octagonal towers and is finished in the Queen Anne Style with shingles with octagonal butts and a rectangular window with a single pane of leaded, colored glass, which replaces an original window of similar character.

The house is located in the Ewauna Heights Addition to Klamath Falls platted in 1900. It occupies a prominent location at the corner of High and Second Streets and is oriented to the SE, overlooking downtown Klamath Falls and Lake Ewauna.

During the 1930s the house was converted to apartment use, and in 1951 further subdivision of space occurred. The current owners have commenced restoration of the house for single family occupancy, and interior spatial organization once again conforms to the original layout. The wall plaster that remained was in such poor condition, due to neglect and mistreatment, it had to be removed. The lath was grooved 1x6-inch pine, secured with square nails.

The front door opens into a square living room which is flanked by the tower rooms. The southwest corner room is entered through a five-panel pocket door. All three of the front rooms have the original moldings and nine foot ceilings. Every window and every doorway is trimmed with beaded frames with corner blocks. The baseboards are capped with a simple molding. The rooms are entirely encircled by a 2-inch-wide picture molding that starts at the eight foot mark. The original ceiling in the kitchen area is of pine planks. The inside stairways, which had been removed during the remodeling of the 1930s, have been put back in their original places. The upstairs southeast tower room is the only room that boasts the

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full octagonal shape.

Also on the nominated property is a single story, gable-roofed garage, or outbuilding which is situated on the northeast corner of the lot, fronting Second Street. It has the original lap siding and has been newly re-roofed with cedar shingles. The feature of interest on the interior is the pine sheathing that is 1 inch thick and has random widths up to 18 inches.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | |

Specific dates c. 1892 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The house built at 137 High Street about 1892 is significant as the singular example of vernacular forms of the Octagonal mode of domestic architecture in Klamath Falls and one of less than half a dozen such examples in the state. Its most noteworthy occupant was prominent jurist, Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives and State Supreme Court Justice Henry Lamdin Benson. The house not only embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Octagonal mode, it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with Judge Henry L. Benson, who made it his home for twenty-three years.

Henry L. Benson lived in Grants Pass, in Josephine County, when he was appointed Circuit Court Judge. From 1892 to 1896 he had been District Attorney of Josephine, Jackson, Klamath and Lake Counties, and in 1896 he was elected to the State Legislature and was made Speaker of the House a year later. It was in 1898 that he was elected Circuit Court Judge of the four counties of the old First District. Because the law required that one of the two judges in the district live "east of the Cascades," and because both Judges, Hanna and Benson, lived west of the Cascade Range at the time, Benson took up residence in Klamath Falls, at 137 High Street.

Benson was re-elected to the Circuit Court in 1904 and kept his position until 1915, at which time he was elected to the State Supreme Court. Noted for his integrity, Justice Benson retained his seat on the Supreme Court in the election of 1920 and served until his death on October 16, 1921. His brother, Frank W. Benson, also was a leading figure in Oregon's public affairs, having served as Secretary of State 1907-1911 and as interim Governor following the resignation of Governor George Chamberlain in 1909. Frank Benson, too, died in office, on April 14, 1911.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Pictorial Oregon, The Wonderland (1915).

Carery, Charles H., History of Oregon (Portland: 1923), Vol. II.

(continued)

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED ITEM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Klamath Falls, Oregon-California

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The Henry L. Benson House is located in Sec. 32, T. 38S., R. 9E., W.M., in Klamath County, Oregon. It is situated on Lot 1 of Block 5 of the Ewauna Heights Addition to the Town of Klamath Falls.

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 E.H. (Hank) and Frances Dearborn

organization date July 30, 1980

street & number 137 High Street telephone (503) 884-1154

city or town Klamath Falls state Oregon 97601

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature ✓

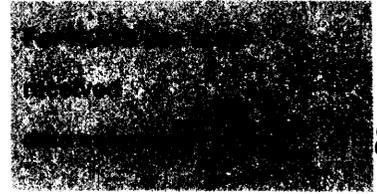
title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 1, 1981

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| For HCRS use only | |
| I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register | |
| | Entered in the National Register |
| Keeper of the National Register | date <u>12/2/81</u> |
| Attest: | date |
| Chief of Registration | |

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An Illustrated History of Central Oregon (Spokane: Western Historical Publishing Co., 1905).

Salem Oregon Statesman (October 16, 1921).

History of the Bench and Bar of Oregon (Portland: 1910).

Conversations with B. Barnstable 6-17-80, now in his 80's, who lived two houses down from the house, at 127 High Street.

Conversations with Florence Horn 6-20-80, now in her 80's, who lived in the neighborhood as a young girl and who remembers Judge Benson.

Conversations with Mrs. Angelo Doveri 5-4-80, who is the sister of Ida Mocchettaz, owner of the house from June 1934 to 1978.