

HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY FORM

State of Washington, Department of Community Development
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
111 West 21st Avenue, KL-11
Olympia, WA 98504 (206) 753-4011

IDENTIFICATION SECTION

Field Site No. 34-145 OAHN No. _____ Date Recorded 3/14/85 revised 8/87
Site Name Historic Johnson House
Common Cobblestone Lodge
Field Recorder ss/tc
Owner's Name Scott and Debbie Mathews
Address 19540 Johnson Road
City/State/Zip Code Yelm, WA 98597

Status

- Survey/Inventory
 National Register
 State Register
 Determined Eligible
 Determined Not Eligible
 Other (HABS, HAER, NHL)
 Local Designation

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Neg. No. 7-30, 31
(Roll No. & Frame No.)
View of SE, SW corner
Date 3/14/85

Classification District Site Building Structure Object

District Status NR SR LR INV

Contributing Non-Contributing

District/Thematic Nomination Name Historic Resources of Unincorporated Thurston County

DESCRIPTION SECTION

Materials & Features/Structural Types

Building Type Domestic/Residence

Plan L-shaped

Structural System Load bearing masonry

No. of Stories Two and one-half

Cladding (Exterior Wall Surfaces)

- Log
 Horizontal Wood Siding
 Rustic/Drop
 Clapboard
 Wood Shingle
 Board and Batten
 Vertical Board
 Asbestos/Asphalt
 Brick
 Stone Cobblestone
 Stucco
 Terra Cotta
 Concrete/Concrete Block
 Vinyl/Aluminum Siding
 Metal (specify) _____
 Other (specify) _____

Roof Type

- Gable Hip
 Flat Pyramidal
 Monitor Other (specify) _____
 Gambrel
 Shed

Roof Material

- Wood Shingle
 Wood Shake
 Composition
 Slate
 Tar/Built-Up
 Tile
 Metal (specify) _____
 Other (specify) _____
 Not visible

Foundation

- Log Concrete
 Post & Pier Block
 Stone Poured
 Brick Other (specify) _____
 Not visible

Integrity (Include detailed description in Description of Physical Appearance)

	Intact	Slight	Moderate	Extensive
Changes to plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to windows	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to original cladding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to interior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LOCATION SECTION

Address 19540 Johnson Road
City/Town/County/Zip Code Yelm vicinity/Thurston/98597
Twp. 15N Range 3E Section 8 1/4 Section SE 1/4 Section NE
Tax No./Parcel No. 23508410400 Acreage 2.73 acres
Quadrangle or map name Bald Hill
UTM References Zone 10 Easting 542330 Northing 5182660
Plat/Block/Lot See Verbal Boundary Description
Supplemental Map(s) NA

Verbal Boundary Description: East half southeast-erly north of 375410 and west of west line of east 660 feet of southeast. Less: beginning at point on west line east half of southeast, 500 feet south northwest corner east 500 feet, south 350 feet, west 235 feet, south to county line Deschutes River, westerly along county line to west line east half of southeast, north to beginning.

Verbal Boundary Justification: The nominated property include entire parcel historically associated with the Johnson House.

Contributing Resources: One building
Non contributing: 0

High Styles/Forms (check one or more of the following)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gothic Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Tudor Revival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italianate | <input type="checkbox"/> Craftsman/Arts & Crafts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Second Empire | <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Romanesque Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Prairie Style |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stick Style | <input type="checkbox"/> Art Deco/Art Moderne |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Anne | <input type="checkbox"/> Rustic Style |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shingle Style | <input type="checkbox"/> International Style |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colonial Revival | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Style |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaux Arts/Neoclassical | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Vernacular |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicago/Commercial Style | <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Vernacular (see below) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> American Foursquare | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Revival | |

Vernacular House Types

- Gable front Cross gable
 Gable front and wing Pyramidal/Hipped
 Side gable Other (specify) _____

NARRATIVE SECTION

Study Unit Themes (check one or more of the following)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/Government/Law |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture/Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Science & Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Movements/Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning/Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing/Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Unit Sub-Theme(s) (specify) _____ |

Statement of Significance

Date of Construction 1927 Architect/Engineer/Builder Holger Jensen Level of Significance: local

- In the opinion of the surveyor, this property appears to meet the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places Period of Significance: 1927
- In the opinion of the surveyor, this property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local).

The Johnson House is one of only two cobblestone houses in the county and is significant for the unusual interpretation of the American Foursquare Style in that building material. With the abundance of wood resources in the county, most other Foursquares are of a more traditional wood-frame construction and do not feature the distinctive porch, wall construction, fenestration or other Craftsman detailing of the Johnson House. Unlike other cobblestone houses from the period, the stones of the Johnson House form load-bearing structural walls rather than a veneer. Rudolf Johnson, the builder, was an individualist who later operated a nudist camp at the site.

The Johnson House is constructed of native prairie cobblestones. The boulders are remnants of the ice sheets of the Pleistocene Ice Age which left the stones as it retreated. The house is the design of Holger Jensen, the builder's brother. Holger Jensen was trained at the Vancouver Deaf School and designed a number of houses in Olympia.

Rudolf Johnson came from Denmark to the area in 1905-06 and ranched on 160 acres bordering on the Deschutes River. From 1940-1955, Johnson operated a nudist club at the house called "Cobblestone Suntanners" at what was then known as "Cobblestone Lodge." Johnson also published the "Sunshine Health Magazine," advocating nudism. At that time, the house also had an adjoining swimming pool which has since been filled in.

Description of Physical Appearance

The Johnson House is located at the south end of Johnson Road, approximately 12 miles southeast of Vail. Surrounded by a large fenced yard and gardens, the house is a massive T-shaped two and one-half story structure built in the Foursquare Style with Craftsman detailing of native cobblestone resting on a stone foundation. Built with load-bearing masonry construction, the foundation walls rise nine feet and measure 20 inches thick. The front wing is on a north-south axis and an intersecting wing extends to the rear. The hipped roof is covered with wood shingles and terminates in a simple boxed cornice with wide soffit. The random-coursed battered cobblestone walls measure up to 22 inches thick and are rounded at the corners. The roof is penetrated by large hip-roofed dormers on the front (west) and side facades, which are clad with clapboards. A massive exterior chimney rises on the north wall and has an inset plaque with the date of construction. A one-story flat-roofed enclosed porch spans most of the front facade and is lit by a wide band of tall multi-paned casements. At its south end is a small recessed open porch with segmental-arched openings formed by columns resting on piers. This porch shelters the main entry door. A second-story french door opens onto the porch roof.

Fenestration is single and paired double-hung windows with multi-paned upper sash set in recessed wooden surrounds. All windows and doors are topped by segmental relieving arches of cobblestone. The dormers have bands of smaller double-hung windows with multi-paned upper sash. A small one-story porch extends from the northeast corner of the house. This porch has an arched door opening and a boarded over arched window opening. The rear of the house has round headed window openings on the second floor. The house appears to be little altered from the original on the exterior, although the second floor has suffered some deterioration, especially on the rear facade.

Major Bibliographic References

- Interview with Tony Johnson, son of Rudolph Johnson, 1985.
Interview with Dorothy Thurston, daughter of Holger Jensen, 1985.

JOHNSON HOUSE

Verbal Boundary Description (continued):

The property can also be described thusly: Beginning at a point 1000 feet south of the end point of improved Johnson Road, proceed 200 feet south, 200 feet east, 200 feet north, and 200 feet west to the point of beginning.