

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 30 1987

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Mt. Hood School House Number of contributing resources: 1
and/or common Mt. Hood Towne Hall Number of non-contriburint resources: 0

2. Location

street & number Oregon State Highway 35 N/A not for publication
city, town Mt. Hood N/A vicinity of Second Congressional District
state Oregon code 41 county Hood River code 027

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Hood River County Board of Commissioners
street & number Hood River County Courthouse, 309 State Street
city, town Hood River N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97031

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hood River County Courthouse
street & number 309 State Street
city, town Hood River state Oregon 97031

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Hood River County Comprehensive
title Land Use Plan has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1976 federal state county local
depository for survey records Hood River County Building & Planning Department, 309 State Street
city, town Hood River state Oregon 97031

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Travelers following Highway 35 north from its junction with Highway 26 on Mt. Hood leave the timbered landscape of the Mt. Hood National Forest and enter a fertile valley rimmed with forest and centered by the rushing East Fork of the Hood River, which flows into the Columbia approximately 15 miles to the north, at the town of Hood River. Pear and apple orchards cover these lower foothills of Mt. Hood and the valley floor. The first major building to be seen is in the small community of Mt. Hood. It is the stately old Mt. Hood Schoolhouse, now known as Mt. Hood Towne Hall, located on the east side of Highway 35. The schoolhouse is situated atop a grassy knoll, facing west. Douglas firs were cleared from the site in 1914 for construction of the building and opening of a school yard.

Mt. Hood School building, built by Louis Cole Baldwin, was completed in 1914 and opened for use in January, 1915. As originally constructed, the single-story, frame school building was a hip-roofed rectangular block on a poured concrete foundation and concrete block basement story. It enclosed two classrooms on the ground story, and washrooms and furnace room in the basement. Exterior elevations reflected the currently fashionable Craftsman style. Eaves overhang the wall plane and are carried on exposed rafter ends. The walls are clad with 8-inch lapped weatherboards and trimmed with a molded water table and cornerboards having inset panels. Two prominent Craftsman style features are centered on the west front: 1) a wide gable-roofed porch, the gable end of which is distinguished by a string course with dentils, louvered, ventilation panel, and broad eave overhangs carried on large knee-brace brackets; and, 2) directly above the porch on the front slope of the roof, a square, shingle-clad belfry with flared base and hip roof with overhanging eaves on outriggers. A simple railing of square balusters and top and bottom rails details each open face of the belfry superstructure as well as the entrance porch. Window openings complete the formal organization of the facade and consist of paired, double-hung windows having three vertical panes over one fixed pane. The window pairs are offset to the outer corners of the facade. Side elevations of the original block are lighted by two formally-placed tripartite window groupings each, the natural lighting capacity of which is increased by multi-paned transoms or top lights above each double-hung unit. The front entrance consists of a double-leaf door with side lights having paneled bulkheads, the whole of which is recessed behind an architrave with Arts and Crafts diagonal bracing. The floor of the porch is reached by a flight of five steps from grade level. The front slope of the roof of the main block is pierced by a brick flue and metal extender which vents the furnace.

In 1926 the school was enlarged to the east, or rear, to include a kitchen and dining area at the basement level and an additional classroom on either side of the central hall. A new wing was added to the north in 1932 to provide a gymnasium and stage. Exterior finish work of both additions matches the original and was carried out by the original builder, Louis Baldwin. Today, the main volume and gymnasium wing are covered with corrugated metal roofing, but wood shingles remain exposed on the belfry roof. The building today includes 5,960 square feet on the first floor and 1,920 square feet in the basement. The main block measures 55 x 60 feet; the gymnasium addition measures 32 x 70 feet. The long west elevation of the gymnasium wing is articulated by two large windows with fixed panes set high in the wall and a pedimented gable-roofed porch sheltering a secondary entrance.

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The classrooms and central hall leading from the front door have wood plank floors, tongue and groove wainscoting and plaster walls. The ceilings are 12 feet in height. The gymnasium is floored with maple and has a 16 foot ceiling. The corridor leading to the gymnasium from the classroom area is a carpeted ramp. One of the original classrooms has been partitioned into two rooms with lowered accoustical tile ceilings. Otherwise, all interior finish work is original, including fixed-in-place chalkboards.

Access to the outside is provided by the double front doors and a door on the south end of the building at the classroom level; a door off the stage; two doors from the gymnasium; and a door from the basement area which leads to a covered ramp leading to the front yard.

The school grounds of slightly under 3 acres encompass two tennis courts and a playground area to the north of the building; parking areas to the east and south; and a broad lawn spreading westerly to Highway 35. The site has as its imposing backdrop the timbered slope of Bald Butte, elevation 3,779 feet.

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 type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1914 **Builder/Architect** Louis Cole Baldwin

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Mt. Hood Schoolhouse, a Craftsman-style grammar school, occupies a parcel of 2.95 acres in the community of Mt. Hood, situated at the intersection of Cooper Spur Road and Highway 35, commonly known as Mt. Hood Loop Highway, in rural Hood River County, Oregon.

The school building was built by Hood River contractor Louis Baldwin in 1914 and opened for use at the first of the following year. It is currently known by the title of Mt. Hood Towne Hall. Abandoned for educational purposes following consolidation of the Hood River County School District in 1961, the property was acquired by Hood River County in 1971 for use as a town hall and recreation center. "Towne Hall," affecting an old English spelling, is the registered name of the organization which operates the building.

The demanding schedule of farm life, the remoteness of the upper reaches of the Hood River Valley in the early 20th Century, and the difficulty of travel over unimproved roads made for an insular community. The property is locally significant under National Register Criterion A as the historic focal point of community social life.

The beginnings of formal elementary education in the upper Hood River Valley are dated to the 1880s, following completion of the Mt. Hood Toll and Wagon Road, which made the area more accessible for settlement. By 1914 the log school of 1884 at this settlement was outgrown, and construction of the new school was begun on a wooded knoll at the foot of Bald Butte. Upon completion, the school displaced Gribble's Store as the community gathering place. Social life was centered in the activities of the Parent-Teachers Organization, which sponsored dances, picnics and volunteered one of the first school lunch programs in the county. When the gymnasium, with its stage, was added in 1932, local social life was enlivened by athletic events, concerts and lectures.

The schoolhouse is locally significant also under Criterion C as a noteworthy example of Craftsman style architecture by leading local builder, Louis Baldwin. It has undeniable presence, as it is the largest and best preserved historic building which identifies the community center.

The first settlers in the upper Hood River Valley, approximately 14 miles south of Hood River on the Columbia, were miners and trappers arriving in 1859. They built their cabins along the trail that connected Hood River with the Barlow Trail to the south. The area became known as Mt. Hood, and was relatively unsettled until 1878 when the railroad convinced the government to survey this remote valley ripe for agricultural development which would generate buyers of railroad land and

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.95 acres

Quadrangle name Parkdale, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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6	1	1	9	9	0
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5	0	4	3	6	4	0
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B

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is Tax Lot 2100 in SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 27, Township 1N, Range 10E, Willamette Meridian, in Hood River County, Oregon.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack Mills, with assistance of Mary Schlick

organization Hood River County Board of Commissioners date August 1, 1986

street & number 4699 Leasure Road telephone (503) 352-7729

city or town Mt. Hood state Oregon 97041

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

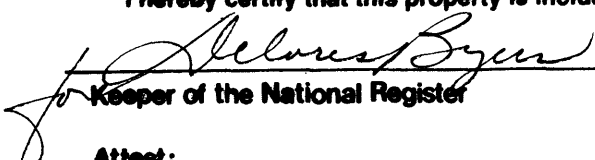
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date March 3, 1987

For NPS use only

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

 date 4-30-87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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users of the shipping facilities. Two events in 1882 led to increased settlement, the first train arrived in Hood River and an Indian uprising ended in a peaceful settlement with the newcomers. In 1883 the Mt. Hood Toll and Wagon Road was completed, making the wooded upper valley more accessible. By 1884 there were enough children in the community to need a school, and the pioneer families erected a one-room log schoolhouse on an acre near the East Fork of the Hood River donated by David Cooper.

In 1905-1906 the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland attracted visitors to Oregon, and the aggressiveness of local land companies brought new orchardists into the valley. By 1914 the children in the community of Mt. Hood had outgrown the old schoolhouse and the residents asked young Louis Cole Baldwin, an up-and-coming builder in Hood River County who had grown up on Mt. Hood, to design and build a new schoolhouse.

For a site, they chose a wooded knoll at the foot of Bald Butte that boasted a running spring. The site is of historical interest, for it had been a popular Indian camping place along the trail, which by 1914 was widened as Toll Bridges Road (ultimately State Highway 35). There Baldwin built a sturdy building, two classrooms on the main floor above washrooms and furnace room in the basement. Built of local lumber, the white-painted school had clean lines with weatherboard siding, hip roof and a generous porch and bell tower. (The bell disappeared after the school was sold as excess property by the Hood River School District in 1961).

The building was completed by Christmastime in 1914 and the children started to school there after New Year's Day, 1915. The first through fourth graders were in one room; fifth through eighth in the other. Older children went to Parkdale, four miles away, for high school.

The cleared timber from the site was cut and stacked near the school. One of the youngsters, hired as janitors, remembers today many trips that first winter from the woodpile to the basement with heavy loads of firewood.

There was no kitchen in the original building and the same woman recalls her teacher, face flushed from the heat, ladling cocoa or soup from a kettle on top of the pot-bellied stove in the basement. Mt. Hood School has been recognized as having the first school lunch program in Hood River County.

When the children went to the old log school, the hall over Gribbble's Store in Mt. Hood was used for community gatherings. But the new larger building gave residents a real community center at last. Children from those early families report that there wasn't much time or energy for community affairs except those centering around the school. The school programs and the annual May picnic were the highlights of the settlers' social life. Most families were too busy with the new orchards (and the potatoes or strawberries they planted for quicker cash crops while the fruit trees matured) to have time or energy for much else. Given the road conditions, the mountainous terrain, and the means of transportation at the

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time, even nearby communities were not easily accessible. At least one family took a house in Parkdale so that their children could go to high school. Other children rode horseback the four miles. This meant that each rural community had to provide for its own social life. In Mt. Hood, this centered around the school building.

With the addition of the basement, kitchen and dining area in 1926, the school lunch became a project of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), one of the first in the county. Mothers took turns cooking the meal, and it was a full-time job (unpaid) for the parent in charge of its organization. The PTO provided the community's main social and educational activities with a business meeting alternating with a second event each month. These social evenings were programs, card parties and dances to raise funds for the lunch programs, and monthly Sunday dinners put on by the group. Many local residents recall learning to dance as children at these school socials.

In 1932, Baldwin added a gymnasium and stage as a compatibly-styled wing to the north elevation. Up to that time, school programs were given on a small stage in one of the two back classrooms which were combined to form an auditorium of sorts. The new stage and hall gave the residents more room to enjoy lectures, concerts and sports events.

Through the years the Mt. Hood School served as polling place for Hood River County Precinct #10, a hearing room, and meeting place for a home extension club, 4-H clubs, Boy Scouts, and a church circle. During the Second World War the school served as civil defense headquarters for the community. A Mt. Hood native recalls spending nights there when his scout troop took its turn spotting and reporting airplanes overhead.

It was a sad day for the Mt. Hood community when residents lost their battle to keep the grade school in the community. In 1961 Mt. Hood School closed its doors and ended 56 years of educating Mt. Hood children. Now serving as a community and recreation center maintained through the efforts of Mt. Hood Towne Hall Association, the building continues to provide a setting for local educational, cultural and social activities, and offers a bridge to the colorful past for the residents and visitors to this oldest village in the upper Hood River Valley.

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Ruralite, Vol. 21, No. 9 (September, 1974).

Hood River News, May 15, 1975.

History of Hood River County, Oregon, 1852-1982, Hood River County
Historical Society, 1982.

Schlick, Mary, "Towne Hall Still Alive, Kicking," Panorama '81,
April 23, 1981, pgs. 54-55.

Schlick, Mary. "Upper Valley History Features Diversity,"
Panorama'85, April 24, 1985, pg. 3.

Interviews

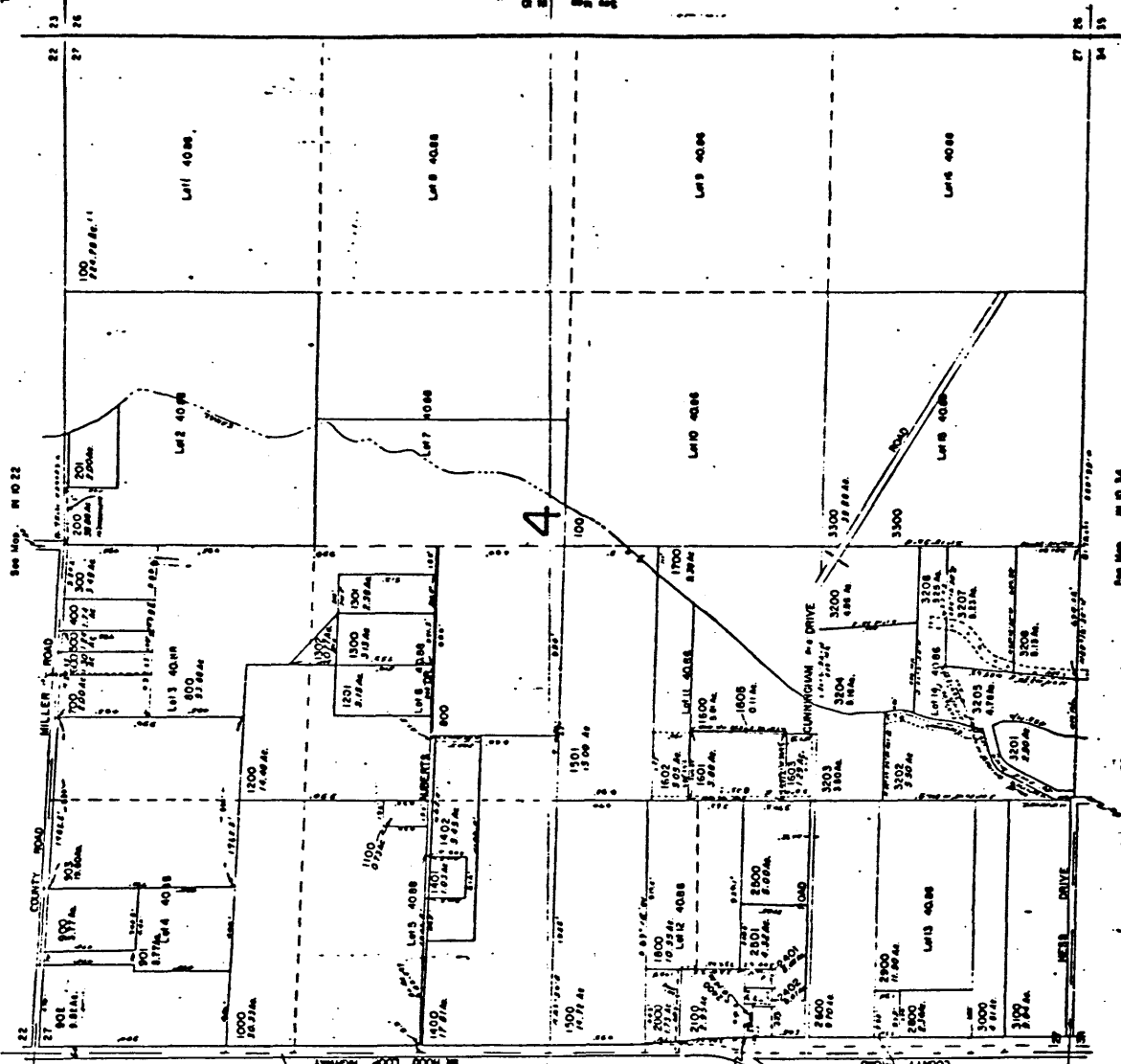
H. S. "Tom" and Florence McKenzie, September 15, 1985.
David Cunningham, November 2, 1985.

IN 1027

Section 27 TIN RICE WM.
Hood River County
15-400

CANCELLED NO'S
TL 1900
TL 2000
TL 2100
TL 2200
TL 2300
TL 2400

IN 1027



*Assessors
Map of
Mt. Hood
Town
Site*

*Tax Lot
2100*

