1 Name of Property

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How 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 any 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.

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MASON COUNTY, WA

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MASON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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Narrative Description

The Mason County Courthouse, constructed in 1930, is a three story (plus partially exposed basement floor), concrete frame, Beaux Arts style building, with a modified rectangular plan and a low slope roof hidden behind parapet walls. The building is clad on the exterior with Tenino sandstone, a locally available stone. The interior finishes include terrazzo floors and painted plaster walls and ceilings, with some stained oak detailing, and are reflective of the exterior style and the era of construction. The courthouse building was originally sited in the center of a slightly sloping city block, facing east onto 4th Street, with perpendicular parking along the surrounding streets, in a mostly residential area of downtown Shelton, the county seat. In 1983 a one and a half story jail addition was constructed, which attaches to the courthouse on the south side; two city blocks were joined together and a street vacated to accommodate this expansion. No other addition or remodel projects have altered the exterior appearance, and the building remains surrounded by lawn and low landscaping extending to the streets on three sides. The surrounding area is now a mix of small commercial and residential uses, as well as other county buildings. Since 2006, both exterior and interior rehabilitation projects have been undertaken at the courthouse, with the intent to address exterior weathering while retaining the historic exterior, as well as maintaining the historic interior features of the public spaces. Currently, the building is in good condition.

The floor plan is organized around a central east-west entry, lobby, and open stair that connects the first and second floors, as well as providing circulation between the main entry on the east, facing 4th Street. and the secondary entrance on the west, facing 5th Street. On both the first and second floors there are dead end corridors running north and south from this central east-west axis, to provide public access to office spaces. Spaces requiring public access have been located on the first and second floors only. These originally included the courtroom, located centrally on the east side of the second floor; court related chambers, jury room, and clerk's office, adjacent to the courtroom on the south end of the building; sheriff and prosecutor's offices to the north of the courtroom, and engineer's and school superintendent offices in the northwest corner of the second floor. The first floor originally housed the offices of all other elected and appointed county officials, including assessor, auditor, treasurer, commissioners, and agricultural agent. Public restrooms are located at the main stair landing level, between first and second floors, creating small raised second floor mezzanines above them. An identical set of restrooms is located below, on the landing between the first floor and basement (originally public restrooms, but now reserved for staff only), along with the secondary west entrance. While the functions of most office spaces on the first and second floors have changed over the years, remodeling of space configurations has not been extensive. The courtroom and public spaces (corridors, stairs, restrooms), which still retain their original uses, remain intact, as do the floor plan layouts in most office spaces. The original elevator cab and equipment has been replaced, but the shaft has not been modified.

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The basement, accessed by means of a pair of narrow stairs near the west secondary entrance (and the elevator), was originally dedicated to vault storage, boiler room and mechanical space, and parking for county vehicles, accessed from the south end of the basement. The exterior grade, which sloped up from south to north about 2 to 3 feet before construction, was modified at construction to be relatively flat around the building, revealing the upper 4 feet of the basement walls while allowing the south vehicle access down into the basement by way of retaining walls. Original area wells remain, allowing some daylight into a few basement locations. The 1983 jail addition to the south of the courthouse removed the vehicle access, and the parking areas in the basement were reconfigured over the years to provide office space. These added wood frame partitions were removed in a recent renovation, but the original concrete walls and columns all remain, as do the boiler room and vault storage functions. Future plans anticipate the development of a courtroom and hearing room in the currently vacant basement spaces.

The third floor is accessed only by the elevator and a spiral stair in a shaft that extends to the basement, with an opening on the second floor as well. The third floor was originally the county jail, and the spiral stair provided secure access from parking and courtroom areas. The third floor has a smaller footprint, allowing for a hidden daylighting well between the third floor exterior walls and the building parapet walls. A portion of the third floor is a raised mezzanine, located over the higher ceiling courtroom area. Since the jail addition in 1983, the third floor has been (and will continue to be) used for storage only. The original layout and jail features remain basically intact, except that the daylighting well has been covered by a wood frame low slope roof that extends the third floor roof to the parapets, creating an attic space around the third floor. This change did not impact exterior building appearance, but did impact third floor windows.

The building structure is primarily concrete. Basement exterior walls are concrete; interior bearing walls and columns are also concrete. Basement floor is a ground slab. Recently, non-bearing steel frame and gypsum board partitions have been added in the basement to prepare for future expansions. First and second floor bearing systems are concrete floor slabs, beams, and columns. Non-bearing hollow clay tile exterior walls and interior partitions are typical, except the vault walls, which are concrete. Third floor structure, including roof, is a combination of concrete slabs, walls, columns, and beams, with non-bearing hollow clay tile partitions in some locations. The only wood structural framing comprises the original lower roof framing at the perimeter daylighting well, and the more recent infill framing that eliminated the well and extended the main roof to the parapets.

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All exterior walls are clad in Tenino sandstone veneer (originally designed to be brick, but revised prior to construction as a cost saving measure). This veneer has recently been restored. Interior wall and ceiling finishes are typically painted plaster. In the public areas, floors are terrazzo. In office and courtroom areas, original hard surface flooring has been removed or covered with carpet. Windows, trim, and mouldings are typically painted wood, with stained oak doors and windows in the courtroom and at the building entries. In a few office areas, suspended ceilings and wood frame partitions with paneling have been added over the years; some have recently been removed to return to the original intent. The low slope roof (not visible from the exterior) is capped with built-up roofing.

The most important architectural features include:

The main (east) entry steps, porch, and vestibule - The stone steps and brass railing create a significant entrance, leading to a pair of heavy paneled oak vestibule doors, with half round decorative glass patterned transom above. This is flanked by decorative stone columns, with a decorative stone baluster above, surrounding a slightly projected roof area resembling a balcony. Stone faced columns across the building face help establish the building style, and the vestibule portal provides important scale and stylistic detail. Inside the vestibule are several examples of plaster and wood detailing. Recent addition of an exterior ramp to the entry, to provide accessibility, was done sensitively, with matching stone walls and railings that maintain the original entry appearance from the street. Two large lampposts and the walk and landscape leading to 4th Street complete the "grand" entry approach. On the west side, the secondary entrance exhibits a scaled down portal with some similar detailing.

The interior stair and lobby area - The public interior spaces demonstrate Beaux Arts styling through decorative plaster relief columns, plaster crown mouldings, terrazzo floor panels with metal joints, and other detail elements. In particular, the stair area includes lighting and decorative wrought iron railing details that contribute to the overall style consistency. The stair itself is somewhat grand, with a central set of a few steps leading from the first floor down to the secondary entrance landing; and flanking upward stairs leading to the mid-level landing, then doubling back over the central stairs to reach the second floor.

The courtroom - Notable features include raised ceilings with beams in relief, jury box with recessed alcoves and plaster detailing, large stained oak windows with half round transoms, and stained oak detailing of several elements (judge's bench and wainscot behind, witness box, railings, pew seating, windows, and doors).

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Alterations to the building are as follows:

Jail addition - The most significant visual alteration is the addition of the jail building on the south side of the courthouse building. This addition, constructed in 1983, is not particularly complementary with the courthouse in plan or appearance. It is, however, a lower building whose physical and visual attachment to the courthouse is minimal. The portion of the new construction that most impacts the courthouse is the secure elevator leading from the jail (with floor level matching the courthouse basement) to the second floor courtroom holding area. This is a rectangular shaft attached to the southeast corner of the courthouse, extending visually from the ground to the trim band below the cornice. Finish is painted stucco, smooth texture, with minimal detailing. Except for this shaft, the original form, mass, and visual texture of the courthouse is relatively undisturbed, and can be clearly seen. See below for additional information about the jail addition.

Interior remodeling - Though undocumented as to time and purpose, a number of interior revisions, mostly in the form of added wood frame walls, have been made over the last 40 years, as more staff people needed to be accommodated. These are mentioned generically above. They have not impacted the public spaces in the building. None are of much consequence, and some have been recently removed. The elevator cab and machinery were replaced at some point, presumably for safety and accessibility purposes. Probably of most visual impact are mechanical, electrical, and low voltage wiring alterations. Since the building was initially provided with steam heat only, exposed cooling units have been suspended within individual office spaces, near the ceiling. Exposed electrical conduit, panels, or pull boxes, have been added on wall and ceiling surfaces in many locations, including some public areas. Original light fixtures were removed and replaced with visually distracting fluorescent fixtures. Exposed communications and data wiring have also been extended throughout the building, and some of the more obvious installations are in the public corridors.

Historic rehabilitation - In 2006 the building, which now houses only court related functions, was assessed for the condition of the structure and systems. It was also reviewed relative to code compliance, accessibility, and historic features. Resulting from the recommendations generated in this report, and driven by the need for functional changes in the building as well, there have been two phases of work completed in 2011. The first addressed restoration of exterior materials - stone veneer, wrought iron railings, painted wood surfaces, exterior doors, scuppers and downspouts, and other minor exterior elements. This phase also provided a new accessible ramp to the main entry, new landscaping and walks, and restored exterior lighting elements. The second phase focused on the interior public areas, including corridors, stairs, restrooms, and the courtroom, refurbishing and rehabilitating all visual elements in these areas. This phase included the replacement of light fixtures and refurbishing of terrazzo, plaster, painted, and stained surfaces. It included the refurbishing of doors, replacing hardware to provide accessibility. An accessible restroom was added on each floor. Numerous other smaller details were returned to original appearance. Additional phases are under design now to address mechanical and electrical infrastructure throughout the building, low voltage wiring improvements, signage in public areas, elevator cab refurbishing, and completion of basement court and hearing rooms to improve building functional capability.

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All of the above work is beginning to effectively address the deterioration and visual compromises that have impacted the building over the years.

The 1983 Mason County Jail addition is a single story structure with a small mechanical/electrical loft/attic second floor area. The floor plan is ordered around a central control room with visual connection to the surrounding detention areas, which are organized in pods. The result is a sprawling building with a raised central roof and radiating lower roof areas. All roofs are sloped metal roofing, and exterior wall surfaces are stucco with some joint detailing, with a few areas of exposed split-face CMU. Interior surfaces are mostly exposed CMU, with some plaster surfaces. Primary structural materials are CMU walls, steel roof structure, and concrete foundations, which include subgrade pilings, due to the building weight and the nature of the soil in this location. The plan and its resulting form are very different from that of the original courthouse, but at the north end of the addition, where the secure elevator attaches to the original courthouse, the building is more rectilinear and relatively low in comparison with the original courthouse. This helps lessen the disturbance to the original courthouse form.

The landscaping around the original courthouse is similar to the original landscaping. Lawns extend from the north, east, and west sides of the courthouse, with areas of shrubs and a few larger trees. The large vertical shrubs originally planted next to the building are no longer in place. Along with a flagpole (recently replaced, but similar to the original flagpole) and the original ornamental light fixtures at the main entry on the east side, a sculpture has been recently added on the east side of the site. The original parking and walkway configurations remain in general, with the recently added ramp and walk noted above. Parking on north, east, and west sides is perpendicular to the streets, facing into the courthouse. The south side of the original courthouse is mostly covered with the jail addition and a small parking lot on the east side of the addition, with little room for landscaping. There are some small areas of lawn and shrubs on the east and west sides, and toward the south end of the addition, small and somewhat bare areas covered with bark and ground cover.

The areas adjacent to the courthouse site are mostly owned and/or leased by Mason County for governmental functions. Across Alder Street to the north there is a small, residential looking office building with space leased by Mason County, and a couple of traditional residences. To the east is a traditional residence that has been turned into office space, and a small doctor's office built in the 1940's, of more modern styling, owned now by Mason County and used for offices. To the south, across the alley from the jail addition, are two small commercial buildings (originally financial institutions), now owned by Mason County and used for office space. Both are of the 1960's era, and have some northwest contemporary styling. To the east are a Juvenile Detention Center (single story joined modular buildings, very utilitarian), surrounded by security fencing; a ranch style residence turned into county offices; and the most substantial county building other than the courthouse, a two story 1980's office building with style akin to California contemporary. In general, the larger setting of the courthouse site is at the edge of the commercial downtown core, with commercial buildings, churches, and traditional (some historic) residences intermixed. This creates a varied context for the courthouse.

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<u>x</u> A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Architecture		
в	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.			
<u>x</u> 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.	Period of Significance 1930		
_ D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.			
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Proper	ty is:			
A	owed by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	Significant Person		
В	removed from its original location.	(Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A		
C	a birthplace or grave.			
D	a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation N/A		
E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	-		
F	a commemorative property.	Architect/Builder		
G	less than 50 years old or achieving significance	Wohleb, Joseph (Architect); I	Dalke, Harold (Architect)	
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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Mason County Courthouse in Shelton, Washington is historically significant under Criteria A, as a property that is directly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the growth, development and industry of Mason County. The building is also significant under Criteria C, as a good example of its type and as a building that represents the work of a master architect, Joseph H. Wohleb. Wohleb, was the premier Olympia area architect of the early 20th century, who in his own right, put into "brick and mortar" the high community ideals of the primary towns and cities in the South Puget Sound, including Olympia and Shelton.

The period of significance begins and ends with the year of completion of the building, 1930. The construction of the courthouse central to the transition of Shelton as a community from a frontier lumber-industry camp/town to a viable long term community with a widening economic base; although the lumber industry, and in particular Simpson Timber Company, would be central to the town's fortunes until the late twentieth century.

The Mason County Courthouse, completed in 1930, is an excellent example of a substantial government building in an ordinary small western United States community, where the building reflects community values and becomes an important center in the life of the community. While Mason County, Washington is not famous for producing important historical figures, most residents of Mason County over the last 80 years have interacted with one another, and with their leaders, in this building. Over the years, it has housed numerous elected officials: commissioners, judges, sheriffs, and many others. It has been the location for innumerable public discussions and court trials with great significance to the community. Over that period, the building has substantially retained the dignified appearance and substantial quality of its era of design and construction during the Great Depression. While technology and other influences have changed our lives greatly, in many ways entering the courthouse remains an experience of the historic small town culture that the building embodies. The building's character and overall expression are representative of elements of the Beaux Arts architectural style, and its important architectural features have been retained, so that consistency of appearance remains. It is one of several substantial Shelton buildings designed by Joseph Wohleb, with other buildings coming both before and after the Mason County Courthouse.

Mason County, originally called Sawamish County, was established November 18, 1854. Ten years later, the name was changed to Mason in honor of C.W. Mason, secretary to the territorial governor. The county seat was first in Mt. Olive (later Oakland), and moved to Shelton in 1888. The same year, the first courthouse was built on property deeded to the county by original pioneer David Shelton, the first elected mayor of Shelton, after whom the town was named. This first courthouse was a wood frame building, and despite a 1904 addition, it had both deteriorated and become too small for the community by about 1915. In fact, the key event that prompted county commissioners to go forward with the design of a new courthouse happened in a sensational murder trial at the end of 1928, during which so many people crowded into the upstairs courtroom of the old frame courthouse that the first floor doors

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jammed and would not open, beams were creaking and groaning, and there was significant visible sag noticed by the auditor in her offices below. She ran upstairs to notify the judge, who immediately sent all unseated spectators out of the building, averting a crisis. But this event got the attention of the county leadership, and within two months a contract was underway to design a new courthouse.

The design was begun in February 1929 by Olympia architect Joseph H. Wohleb. After budgeting carefully and levying a small added tax for about fifteen years, the county commissioners had enough saved to commission a new building, and selected Wohleb to design the new courthouse, which would be built on the same site as the existing courthouse. Wohleb (1887-1958) was selected as architect and building superintendent because of his reputation, his previous work on local public buildings, and his warm working relationship with Mark Reed, Shelton's primary benefactor and president of Simpson Timber Company. In town, Wohleb had already designed homes for Frank and Sol Reed, Irene S. Reed High School (1923), Shelton Memorial Hall (1924), and the Govey Building (1924).

Joseph Henry Wohleb

Born in Waterbury, Connecticut on September 14, 1887, Joseph Henry Wohleb grew up in northern California in the community of Vallejo. For reasons unknown, he left Vallejo High School at the age of fifteen to enlist at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, where he became an apprentice boat builder. For the next five years, he worked as a cabinetmaker and patternmaker. After more than three years at the shipyard, Wohleb requested a discharge effective January of 1907. He then worked for a year in a private boatbuilding operation in San Francisco. By 1911, he was listed in the Vallejo city directory as a carpenter, residing at his parents' home. Later that same year he moved to Olympia, Washington.

What motivated Wohleb to settle in Olympia is not known, but it must have been a promising location for a young man determined to advance himself in the building trades. He evidently calculated that there was work for at least one man in architecture. According to city directories from the year of his arrival in Olympia, the city only had one registered architect in the community, S. G. Ward. The next year Ward was gone, and from then until World War II, three more architects (in addition to Wohleb) would come and set up practice in Olympia. None remained longer than a year or two, leaving Wohleb's practice to thrive.

When he arrived in Olympia at the age of 26, what Wohleb lacked in education he made up for with a clever mind and a strong grasp of construction and engineering concepts. He quickly began making a successful living by billing himself as an architect, first listed in the 1913 Olympia city directory.

On February 12, 1912, Wohleb was married in Olympia to Matilda Gresl. Together they had three children: Robert Henry (1916-1966), George Gresl (1918-1926), and Joseph Wensel (1924 - ?). The year of his marriage also saw Wohleb's first documented design, the Jeffers Photographic Studio at 500 S. Washington Street in Olympia. The building's Mission Revival style with its stucco walls, red tile roof, and sculpted parapet walls would become signature features in much of Wohleb's work in the early part of his career.

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In the mid teens, he concentrated on houses in the Tudor and Craftsman styles, and designed several industrial structures. He also completed the Neo-Classical Carnegie Library (1914) in Olympia, with the Seattle architectural firm of Blackwell & Baker, which raised his public profile. The decade of the teens closed with Wohleb turning out an impressive range of buildings for residential, public, and commercial use. Success was further marked by receipt of his architectural license (Washington State #197) on November 29, 1919. That year, the State of Washington had passed its first law requiring the licensing of architects.

For a short time, Wohleb took on a partner, J. Charles Stanley, but the relationship was dissolved mutually. Wohleb then went on to work independently until he was joined by his son, Robert, in 1946. During the peak years of his practice, he employed an office force of young assistants ranging from high school graduates to licensed architects, all who reportedly found Wohleb a strict taskmaster who could react explosively when his high standards were not met.

During the 1920's Wohleb enlarged the volume and geographic scope of his practice by turning out an ever-increasing number of buildings in communities outside of Olympia, from Sequim in the north to Kelso in the south. He strengthened his emerging specialty in club design by building the grand Mission style Elks lodges in Centralia (1920) and Bremerton (1921), and American Legion halls in Shelton and Olympia (1922).

By the time the Mason County Commission selected Wohleb to design the new courthouse, his portfolio was becoming quite large, but the courthouse commission was important in establishing Wohleb's significant influence on public buildings in the area. His designs during the 1930's and 1940's are reflective of the era in which they were designed. Wohleb continued his architectural practice until shortly before his death at age 70 on June 11, 1958. He was buried in Olympia's Calvary Cemetery. His son continued the firm as Robert Wohleb & Associates until his own death in 1966.

Wohleb is known to have designed more than fifty Olympia buildings, including several on the state Capitol Campus: public and civic buildings, residences, and commercial structures, as well as thirty other buildings throughout western Washington. He also designed other buildings in Shelton following the courthouse, including the Shelton Junior High School (1931), Shelton City Hall (1932) and Shelton Gymnasium (1941). The Mason County Courthouse remains a quality example of Wohleb's skill as a designer and construction superintendent, and is typical of his use of styles and construction techniques contemporary with the time of construction.

Wohleb's role in the building of Washington state is a significant one. His achievement is all the more remarkable in that he launched his career with formal education that appears to have ended after his freshman year of high school. He arrived in Olympia with practical experience consisting of three and one half years as a boat builder for the U. S. Navy, and another four years of combined civilian

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boatbuilding and house carpentry. When he died forty-seven years later, he had carved out one of the most productive and influential architectural careers in the history of Washington state.

Courthouse construction

In March 1929, Wohleb submitted sketches to the Mason County commissioners. They had up to \$150,000 set aside for the new courthouse, but the architect felt he could complete the building for less. The sketches were accepted with little modification, and the work of creating bidding documents proceeded throughout the spring of 1929.

In June of 1929, Mason County paid F. L. Morrill of Centralia \$900 to relocate the old wood frame courthouse building 108 feet east and 55 feet south, so that the new structure could occupy the same site as the old one, and county business continued in the relocated structure. The wooden jail/residence located next to the courthouse (which was known for its numerous escapes of inmates) was also relocated.

Twenty bids were received at the bid opening in July 1929. The general contract, which did not include mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and many other specialty contracts, was awarded to E.P. Brewster of Chehalis, in the amount of \$105,679. Wohleb's original plans called for the building to be finished with brick and terra cotta; however, when the general contract was awarded, the builder proposed an alternate finish of Tenino sandstone, for a savings of \$500, which was accepted by the commissioners. Additional specialty contract bids awarded included:

Heating and ventilation - A.J. Rushlight & Co., Portland, \$9,340.

Plumbing and sewage (all brass piping) - Martin Hardware, Olympia, \$8,542.

Electrical - F.W. Rush & Co., Seattle, \$3,229.

Painting - Thayer & Thayer, Seattle, \$2,889.

Elevator - Otis Elevator Co., Seattle, \$3,890.

The total of all contracts was below the \$150,000 budget allowed, and work was authorized immediately.

The first shovels of dirt on the site were turned on July 15, 1929, in a groundbreaking ceremony attended by about one hundred people. Mrs. Mary Adams, the daughter of Chief Sabudcup of the Squaxin tribe, and J. B. Shelton, the first native white son of the community and son of founding pioneer David Shelton, wielded the shovels, representing the original area inhabitants and the pioneer population. Mrs. Mary Shelton Cyphert, daughter of David Shelton and oldest area inhabitant, was also present. Mark E. Reed, Simpson Timber Company official and state representative, congratulated the county commissioners for the unusual foresight, planning, and resolve to prepare for the construction of a new courthouse by use of a special tax levy collected over the previous years, even though it was not an easy and popular decision.

Construction began with the pouring of the new concrete footings and concrete frame, and continued with fervor throughout the summer and fall. Additional contracts were awarded to other specialty contractors in August 1929, still keeping costs below the allocated budget:

Finish hardware - Martin Hardware, Olympia, \$2,120.

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Finish flooring – L.M. Co., Shelton, \$2,472. Vault doors – Paul C. Giesy Co., Seattle, \$980.

Red clay tile was used extensively, to infill the exterior walls within the concrete frame, and for interior partitions. The first exterior Tenino sandstone arrived on site in October, from the Western Quarry Company in Tenino. Lorenz (Larry) Friedrick Scheel of Tenino, a long time resident of Union, and later Olympia, was stone cutter for the project.

The cornerstone was laid on November 6, 1929, with a time capsule placed inside by county auditor Ida Loughnan. Among the contents were copies of The Shelton-Mason County Journal, a one dollar bill, a picture of the old courthouse, and a letter from the present county employees to those of the future. The expectation was that the time capsule would remain unopened for the next hundred years. An appropriate inscription was placed on the cornerstone: "DEDICATED TO THE PEOPLE OF MASON COUNTY, A.D. 1929". By December 1929, the building was well over halfway complete, and hopes were high for early occupancy.

Additional specialty contracts were awarded again early in 1930, for some of the later elements of the construction process, including:

Steel furniture - Milwaukee Chair Co., Wisconsin, \$20,169.

Light fixtures - Robbins Electric Co., Shelton, \$1,471.

Courtroom furnishings - Benton Planing Mill & Supply Co., Oregon - \$1,666.

Signage - Tacoma Rubber Stamp Works, Tacoma, \$72.

In addition, there were costs for jail specialties of \$12,840.; miscellaneous undesignated costs of \$11,047.; and the architect, Joseph Wohleb, was paid \$7,788. for all of his work, which included supervision of all construction, including the specialty contracts. The total cost of the project ended up to be approximately \$194,000.

The official dedication ceremony for the Mason County Courthouse was held on May 5, 1930, with an estimated attendance of one thousand people. Schools, businesses, and local government offices closed for the event, declared a city holiday. There was great community pride in the new facility, and along with speeches by numerous local and Olympia dignitaries there were selections by the Olympia Post Band. County residents were encouraged to visit the new offices of all public officials, who had moved in that morning, and thoroughly enjoyed welcoming their fellow citizens into the new courthouse.

On opening day, the facility included the following functions:

- First floor offices of the agriculturalist; auditor; assessor; treasurer; commissioners (including a public meeting area); and home economics agent.
- Second floor offices of the clerk; prosecuting attorney; sheriff; county nurse; superintendent of county schools; engineer; an office for visiting attorneys; and the courtroom, judges' chambers, and jury area.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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MASON COUNTY COURTHOUSE MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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- Third floor the jail, with housing for up to 40 prisoners, including areas for women, juveniles, solitary confinement, and minor offenses. The jail facility included a kitchen, and the third floor was accessed by only the elevator and a spiral stairway which served the second floor sheriff's office and the basement.
- Basement Storage vaults, including a vault designated for confiscated illegal liquor produced during the days of Prohibition; mechanical areas; and parking for county vehicles.

The building's elevator was of particular interest and illustrated the quality of the building, since at the time of construction there were only a couple of other courthouses in the state with elevators, in the more urbanized areas of King and Pierce counties. The community had great reason to be proud of their new courthouse, which represented the growth, stability, and bright future of Mason County.

Beaux Arts Style

The popularity of the Beaux Arts style was waning in the United States by the time the Mason County Courthouse was built, but it remained an accepted style, particularly for public buildings and structures that required an expression of importance and grandness. The Beaux Arts style was rooted in Neo-Classicism, combining Roman and Greek architectural principles with Renaissance ideals, and derived from the training provided at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. Some of the important characteristics of Beaux Arts style buildings include: flat roofs; raised first story, usually with rusticated base; hierarchy of spaces, from "noble" spaces (grand entrances and staircases) to utilitarian ones; arched windows; arched and pedimented doors; symmetry; classical architectural detailing; and subtle polychromy.

The Mason County Courthouse demonstrates most of the characteristics of the Beaux Arts style. However, it also incorporates some of the more modern aesthetic principles that were beginning to take hold at the time of its design in 1929. This more "stripped down" aesthetic was particularly appropriate for a public building in Shelton, a small town with very limited resources and a working class mentality.

Some of the most obvious Beaux Arts influences in the building include: the overall form; the raised first floor and grand entry steps; the classical portico entry with flanking columns and balcony appearance above; the symmetry of the building both inside and out; the grand interior stair and railings; the placement of windows and their proportions; the arched detailing over the upper windows and main entry doors; and the frieze, cornice, details, and building identification at the top of the building.

Some of the areas where the design seems to have been influenced by modern aesthetics include the base, which is raised but not rusticated, and the relatively simple detailing, particularly on the interior, including columns, railings, relief pilasters, doors and transoms, etc. In addition, it appears that the working class, frugal mentality of the community, as well as the timing at the beginning of the Great Depression, may have further influenced the design and/or construction process in that the Tenino

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sandstone chosen for the exterior walls, replacing the originally designed brick veneer which would have added detail and distinction between walls and stone base, was a result of cost saving measures.

However, the building remains a quality example of the Beaux Arts style, especially as it was appropriately applied in the context of a rural community and a smaller building, with more limited opportunities to exploit all the characteristics of the style.

Conclusion

For over fifty years, nearly all county justice and administrative functions remained in the courthouse building, and the building and site were self contained, serving well the needs of the community. However, in the 1970's and 1980's, administrative staffing and justice system functions rapidly increased, requiring added space. A new jail addition was constructed onto the courthouse in 1983. Designed by architect Harold Dalke, and constructed by Jones & Roberts, the new jail attached to the courthouse via an enclosed hall and elevator tower. A street was also vacated and the site increased to one and one half blocks. Surrounding properties were also purchased by Mason County, and a new administrative building was constructed across 5th Street from the courthouse. Since that time, numerous small commercial buildings and residences in the adjacent blocks have been purchased by Mason County and adapted for use as office spaces; and a modular Juvenile Holding facility has been added southwest of the courthouse, across 5th Street. These changes have resulted in the current situation, with the courthouse housing only court related functions, along with storage on the Third Floor (the original jail, no longer used for holding purposes).

The growth of Shelton and Mason County is somewhat unique. Mason County's population base developed almost completely due to the logging industry (and the businesses that supported it), and until the 1980's, the Simpson Timber Company was clearly the central business figure in Mason County, so much so that Shelton had the feel of a "company town" through those years. In addition, Shelton was, and is still, the only incorporated city in the county, and so naturally became, and remained, the county seat. During the period of significance, this gave the community a very strong identity and character that has been diluted somewhat in the intervening years. But the Mason County Courthouse building provided a consolidated, and very well defined, place where county government happened for many years.

The building itself, especially its exterior facades, reflected the values and character of its working class community - solid, strong, somewhat imposing and a little austere, but not unwelcoming. It established the importance and value of government, drawing on stylistic cues to visually suggest the functions housed inside. Though it does not boast one-of-a-kind details or embody a particular style perfectly, and even with the attached jail addition, the building maintains a strong and singular presence, and taken as a whole, is a worthy example of a small town county courthouse, typifying a lifestyle and era of government values that is becoming hard to find.

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MASON COUNTY COURTHOUSE MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Section number	9	Page 1 of 1

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"The Beaux-Arts Style." About.com Architecture < architecture.about.com/od/periodsstyles/ig/.../Beaux-Arts.-0cU.htm >

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11. Form Prepared	Ву				
name/title Len W	illiams, Architect				
organization Fost	er & Williams Associates, P.S.		date	December	27, 2011
street & number	P.O. Box 102	1	elephone	360-426-0	0511
city or town	Shelton	state	WA	zip code	98584
Additional Docum					
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Continuation Shee	ts				
	ap (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicati				
A Sketch n	nap for historic districts and properti	ies having large ac	creage or n	umerous reso	urces.
Photographs					
Representa	tive 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 S	HPO or FPO.)			
name Maso	n County				
street & number	411 N. 5th Street	telepho	one 36	0-427-9670,	ext. 669
city or town	Shelton	state _WA		zip code	98584

MASON COUNTY, WA

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MASON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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Verbal Boundary Description

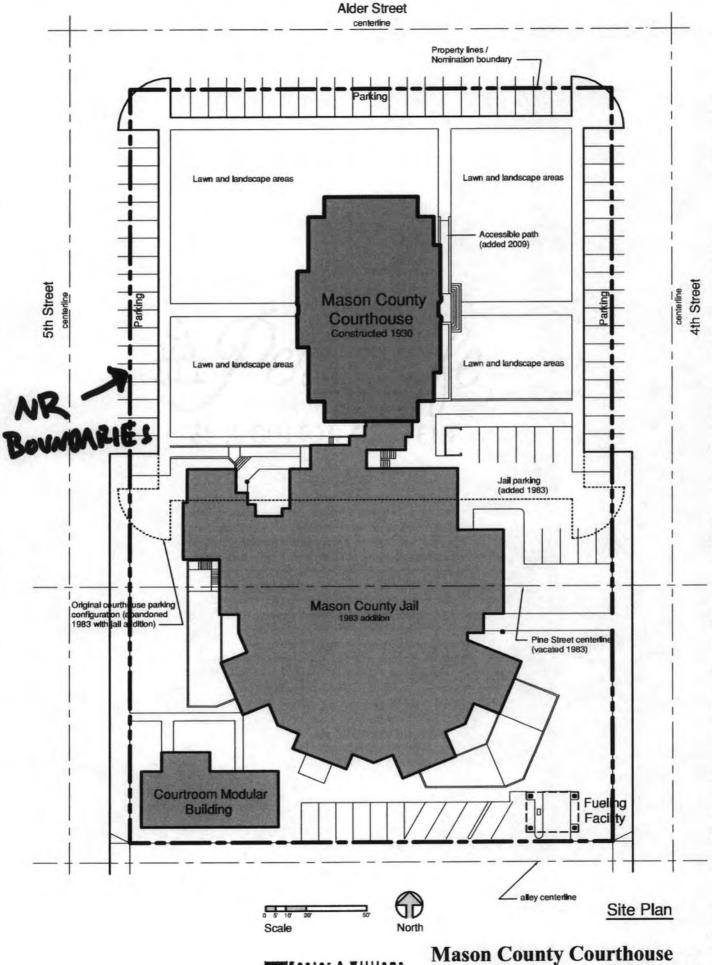
The Mason County Courthouse is located Shelton, Washington in David Shelton's First Addition to Sheltonville, Block B (no lots in original plat), including north half of vacated Pine Street right of way; and Block G, Lots 1-4, including south half of vacated Pine Street right of way.

Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary was selected because it defines the extent of the site that currently houses the courthouse. This site is expanded from the original single block, which was surrounded on four sides by streets. When the Mason County Jail was added in 1983, Pine Street (the street just south of the courthouse) was vacated between 4th and 5th streets, and that 60' right-of-way, plus the north half of the block just south of Pine Street (north of the mid-block alley), became the site for the Mason County Jail. Though the jail is mostly an independent building, it is connected by an elevator to the original courthouse, and so the entire courthouse and jail complex is included within the boundary.

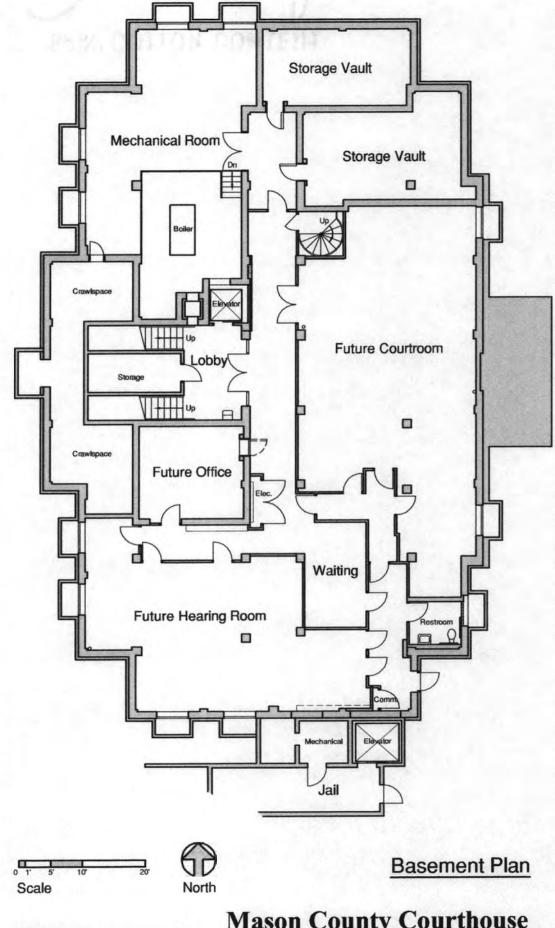


ASSESSOR'S PLAT MAP



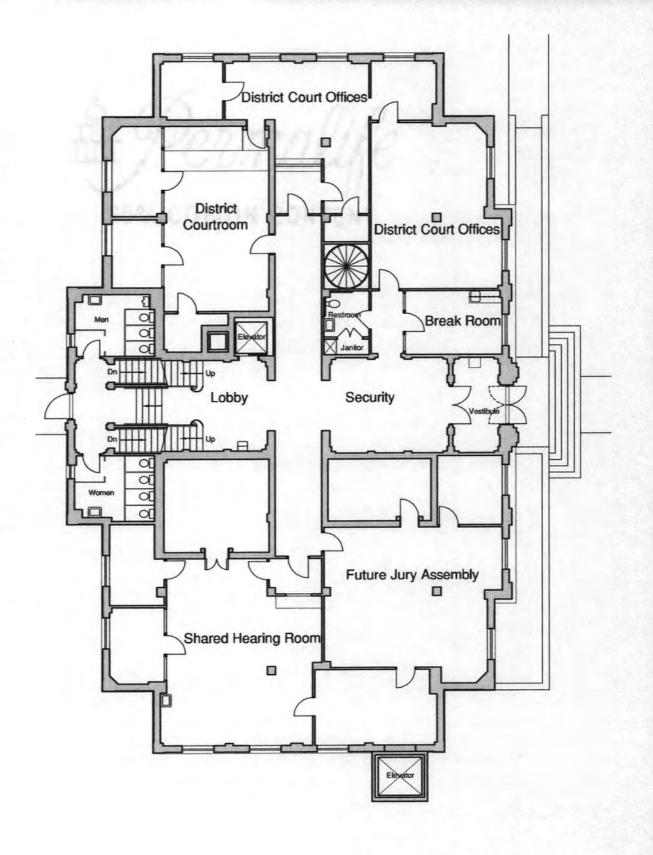
AIA Architects

Existing Plans Shelton, Washington





Mason County Courthouse
Shelton, Washington Existing Plans



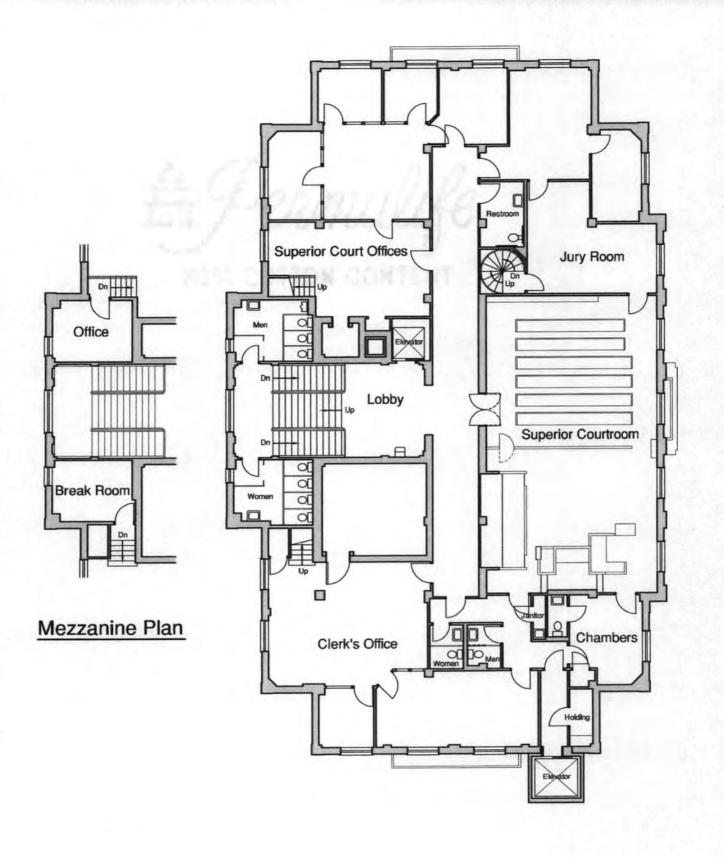


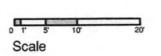


First Floor Plan



Mason County Courthouse
Shelton, Washington Existing Plans



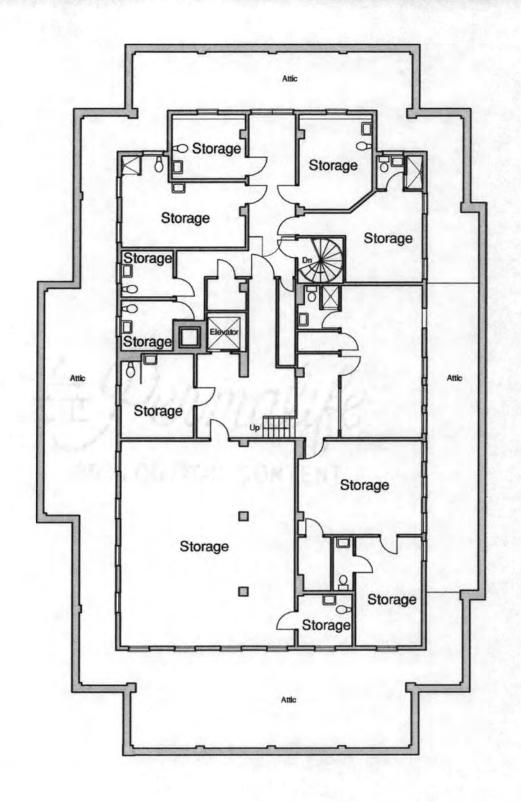


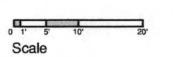


Second Floor Plan



Mason County Courthouse Shelton, Washington Existing Plans

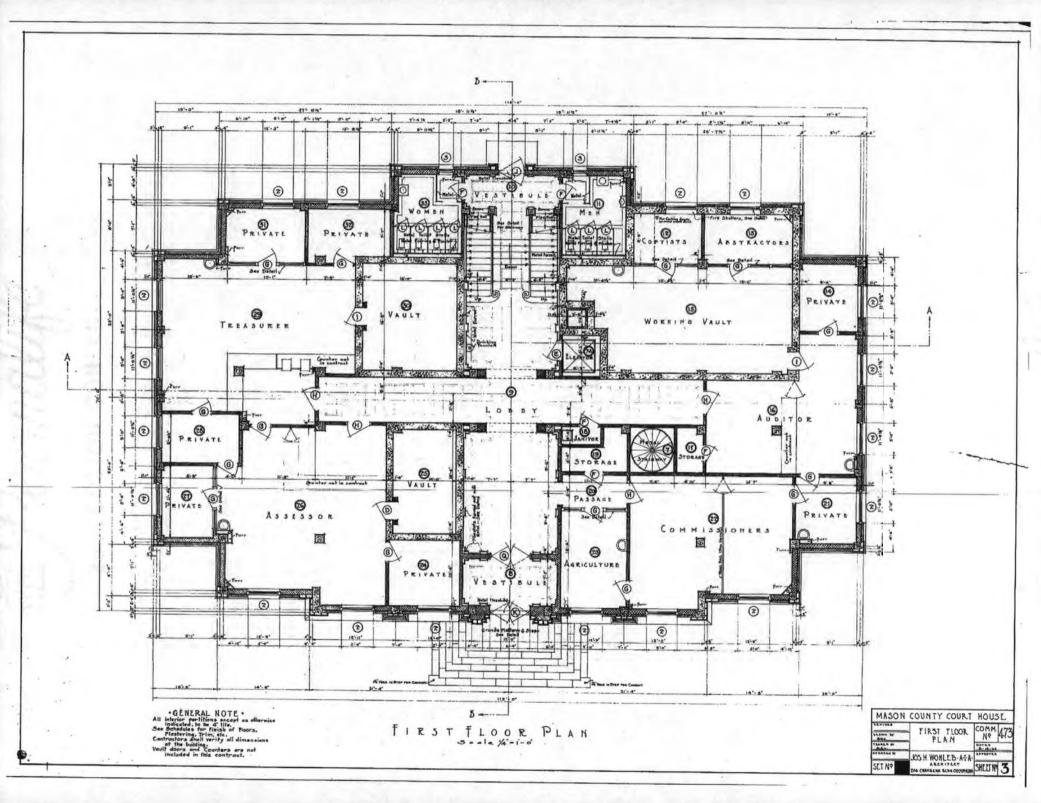


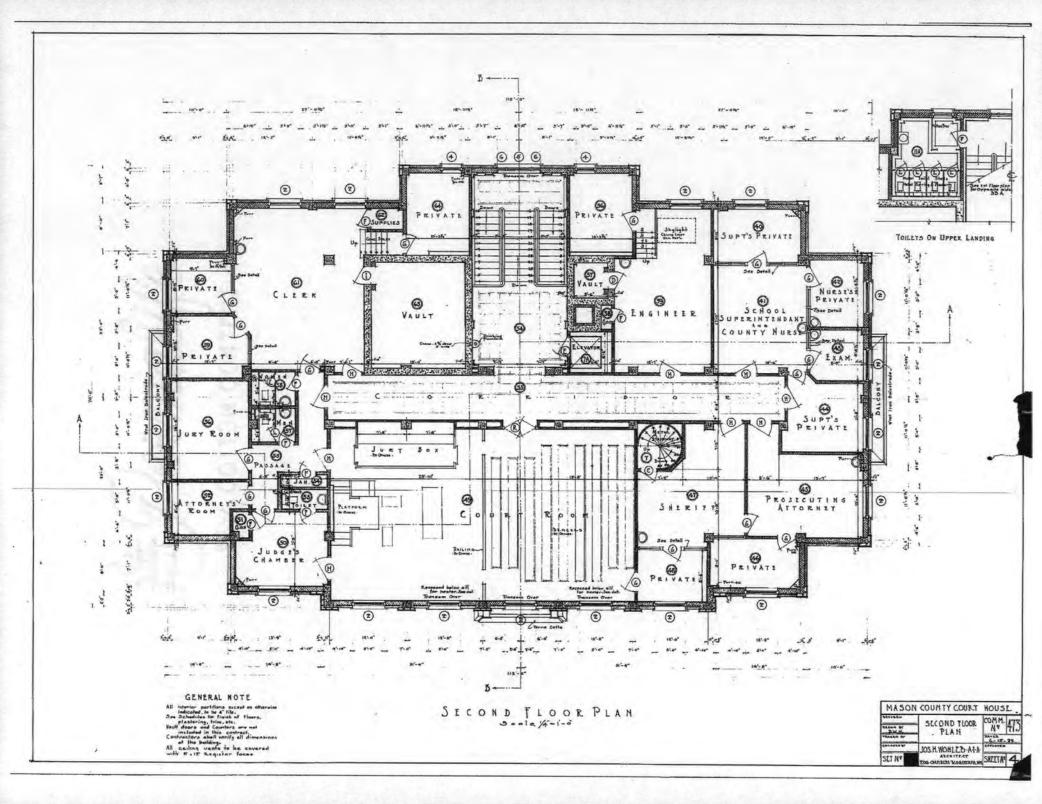


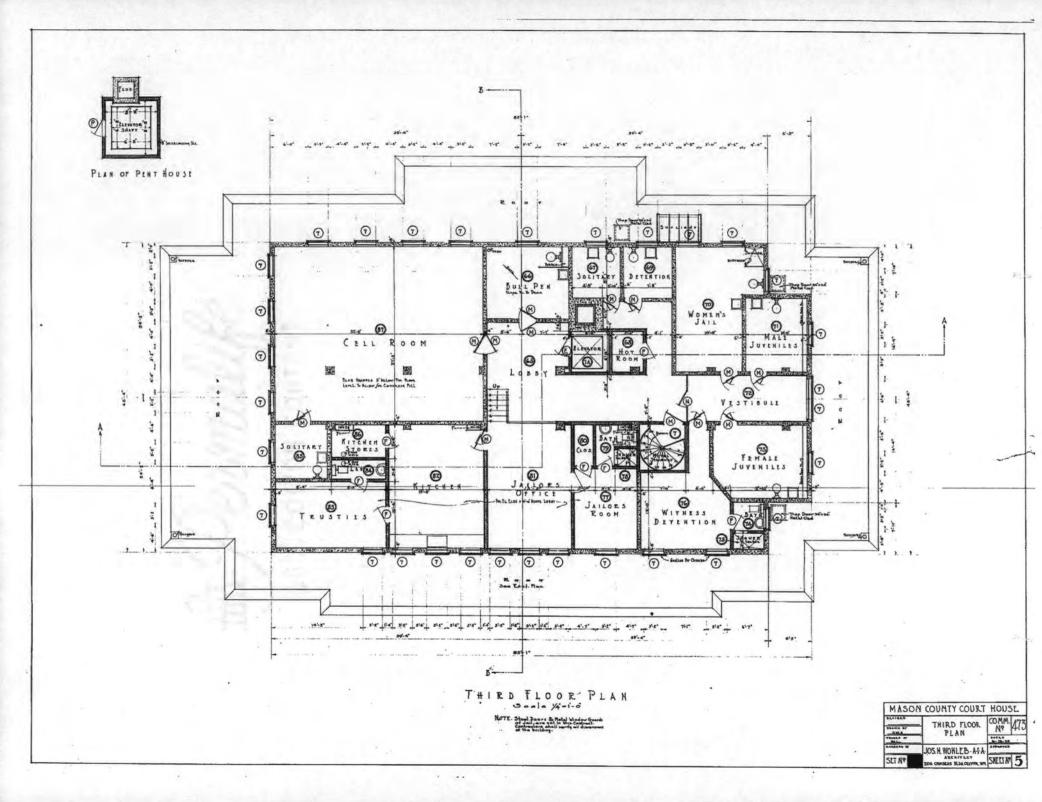


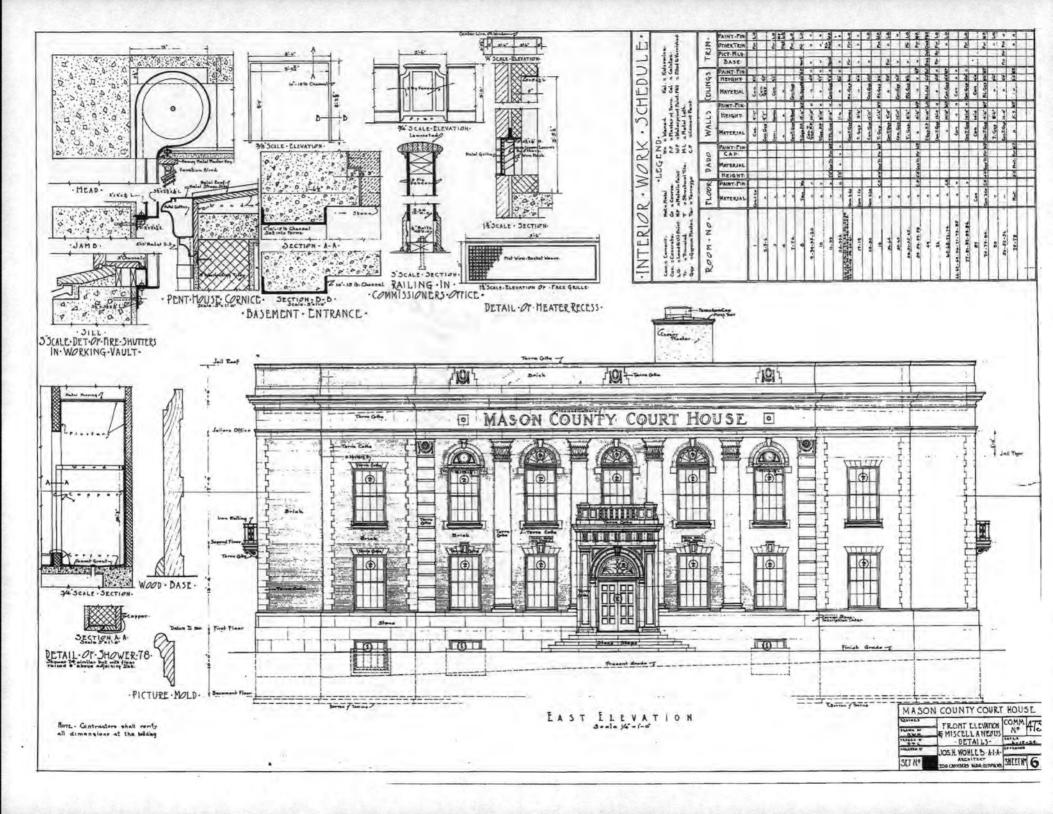


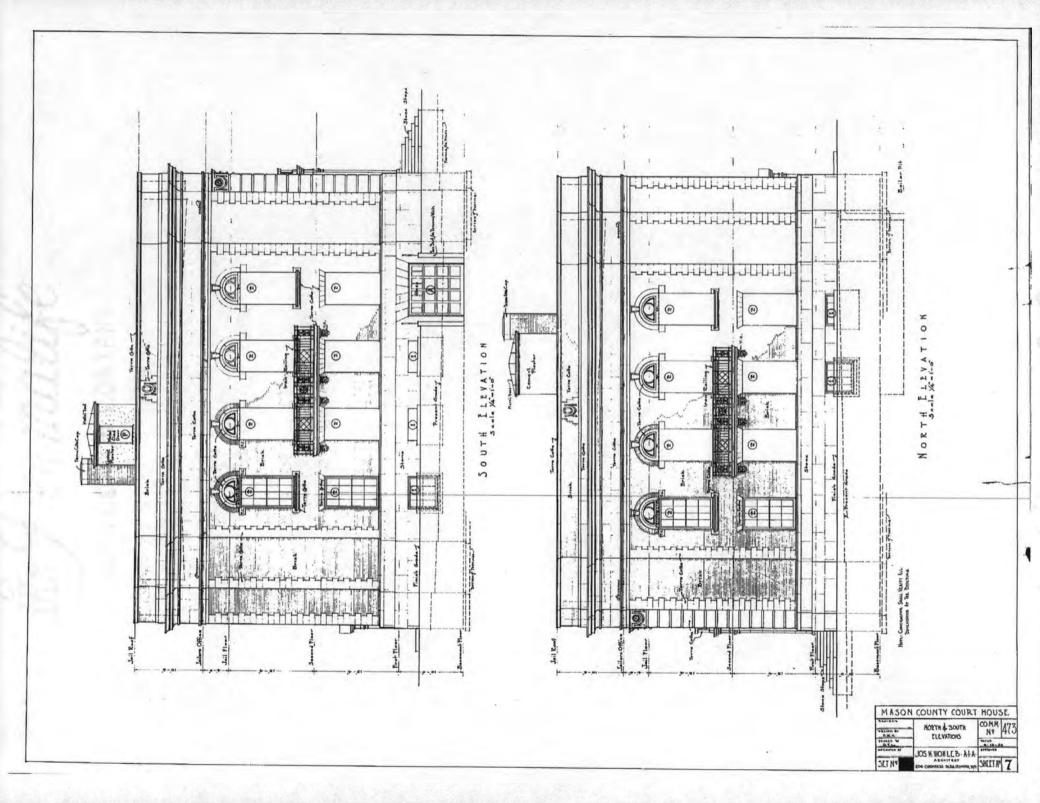
North

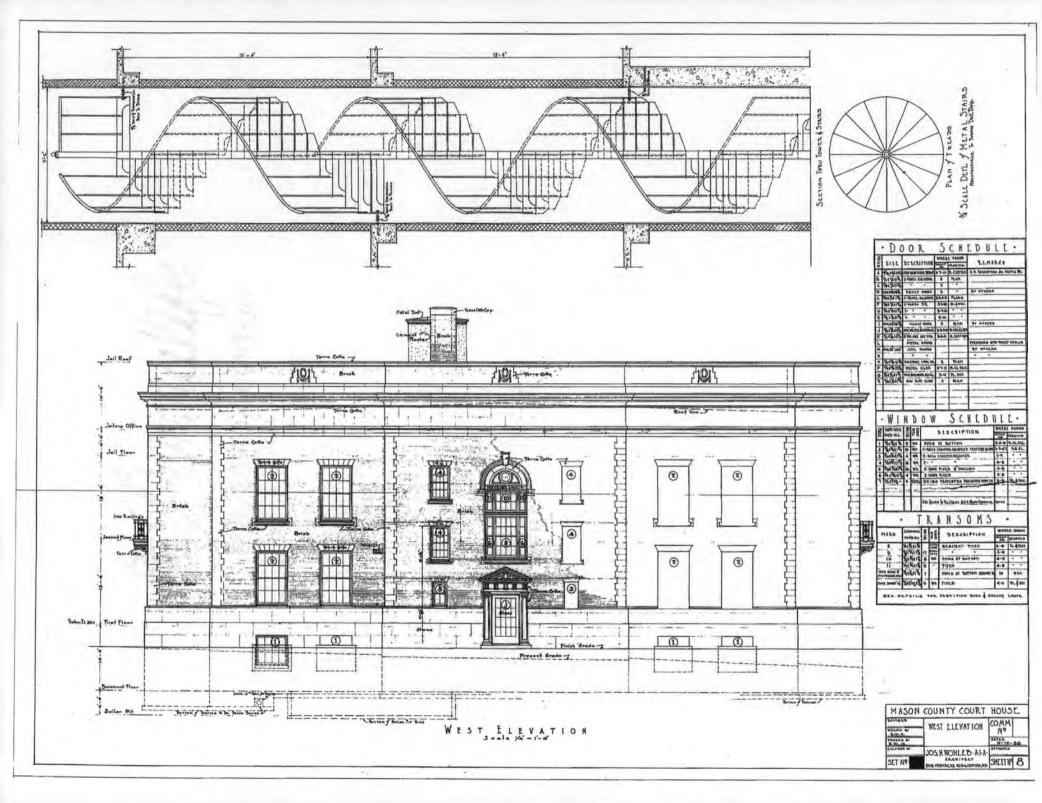


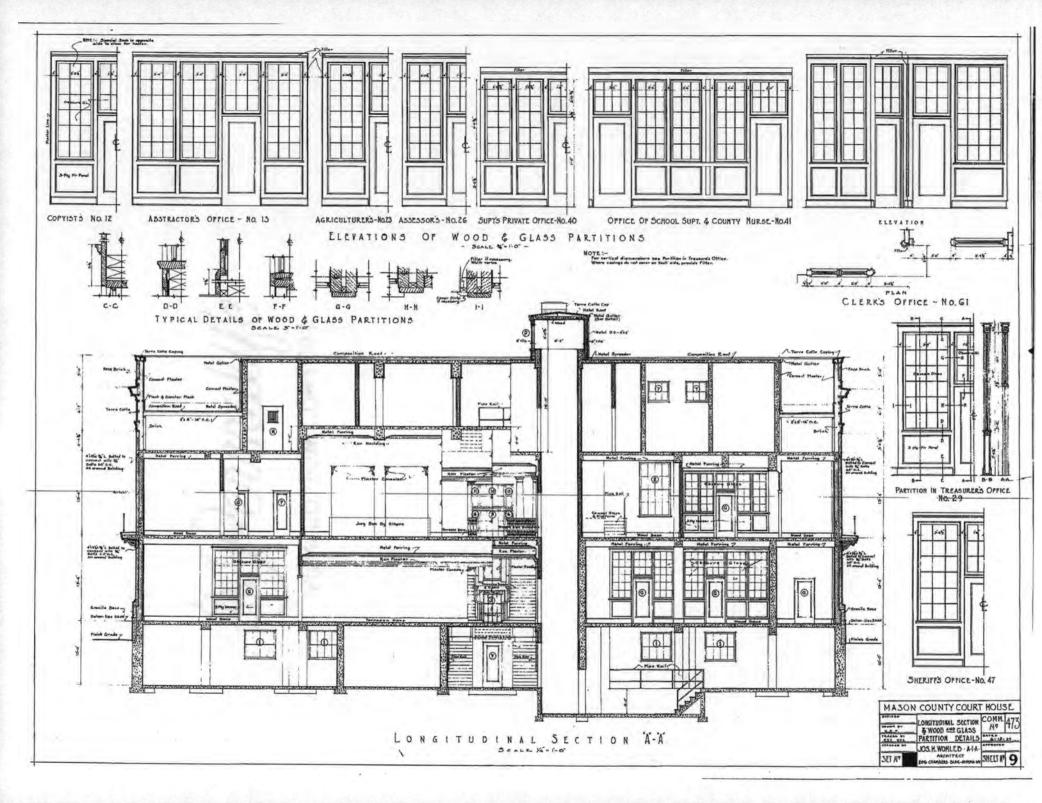


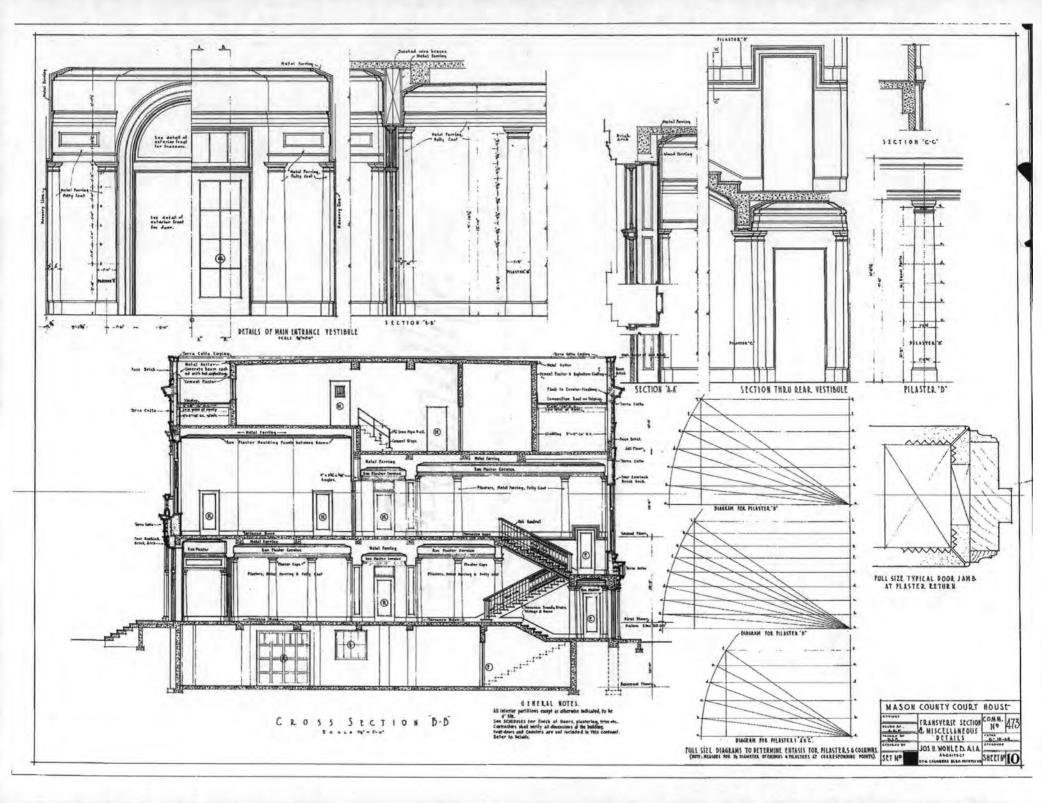














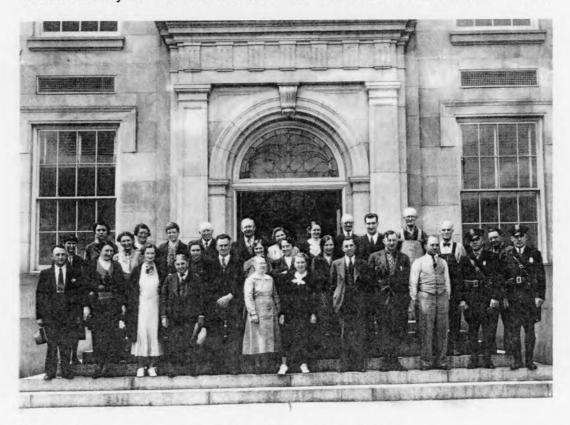
Mason County Courthouse Construction - Southwest corner - 1929



Mason County Courthouse Construction - Southeast corner - 1929



Mason County Courthouse Construction - Second Floor courtroom - 1929



Mason County Courthouse staff at main entry - 1937



Mason County Courthouse - Southwest corner - c. 1935



Mason County Courthouse - Southwest corner - c. 1940



Mason County Courthouse - rear elevation - Dec. 1968



Mason County Courthouse - rear elevation - Dec. 1968



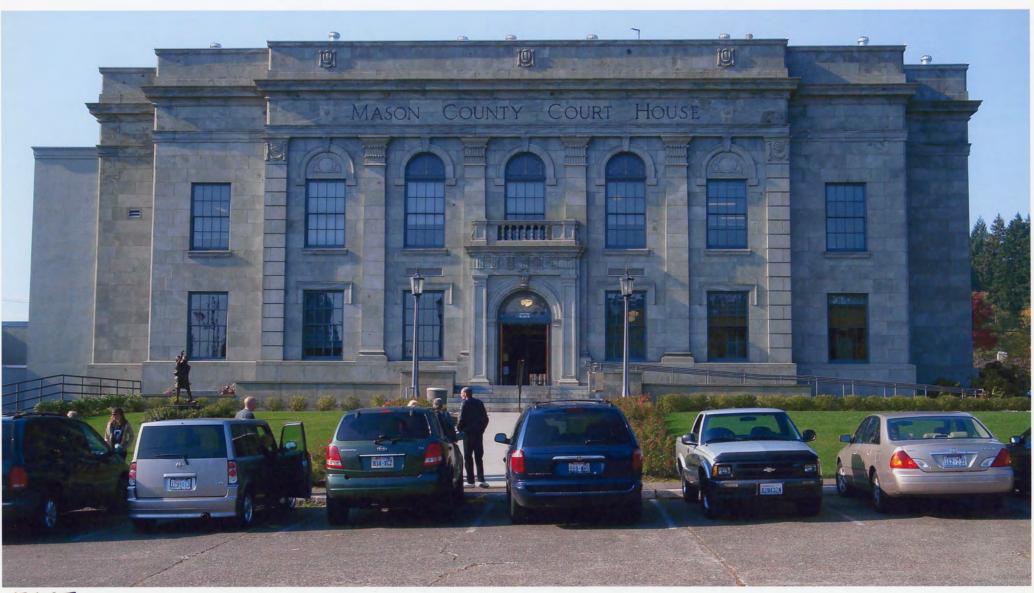
Former Mason County Courthouse built in 1888. An addition was added in 1904, but the building served as the County Courthouse until 1930 when the new building was built.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Mason County Courthou NAME:	se		
MULTIPLE NAME:			
STATE & COUNTY: WASHINGTON, Mas	on		
DATE RECEIVED: 11/23/12 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/05/13 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:	DATE OF	PENDING LIST: 45TH DAY:	12/21/12 1/09/13
REFERENCE NUMBER: 12001160			
REASONS FOR REVIEW:			
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LAN OTHER: N PDIL: N PER REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR	DSCAPE: N IOD: N DRAFT: N	LESS THAN 50 Y PROGRAM UNAPPR NATIONAL:	TEARS: N ROVED: N N
COMMENT WAIVER: N			
✓ ACCEPTRETURNREJ	ECT /. (7.13 DATE	
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:			
Entered in The National R	egister		
Historic Pla	ices		
RECOM./CRITERIA			
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If a nomination is returned to t	he nominat	ing authority,	the



EAST



NORTHEAST



SOUTHWEST



SOUTHEAST



EAST-ADDITION



SOUTHEAST- ADDITION



SOUTH-ADDITION



LOBBY



MID-LEVEL



LOBBY



LOBBY



UPPER LANDING



COURTROOM



COURTROOM REAR





STATE OF WASHINGTON

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Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

1063 S. Capitol Way, Suite 106 - Olympia, Washington 98501 (Mailing Address) PO Box 48343 - Olympia, Washington 98504-8343 (360) 586-3065 Fax Number (360) 586-3067

Nov 19, 2012

Paul Lusignan Keeper of the National Register National Register of Historic Places 1201 "I" Street NW, 8th Floor Washington, D.C. 20005

RE: Washington State NR Nomination

Dear Paul:

Please find enclosed new National Register Nomination forms for the:

- Donohue, Michael & Myra, House San Juan County, WA
- Mason County Courthouse Mason County, WA
- Clark County Poor Farm Clark County, WA

Should you have any questions regarding these nominations please contact me anytime at (360) 586-3076. I look forward to hearing your final determination on these properties.

Sincerely,

Michael Houser

State Architectural Historian, DAHP

360-586-3076

E-Mail: michael.houser@dahp.wa.gov

