

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR - 6 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Fluhrer Bakery Building

and/or common Ebert's Art Centre

2. Location

street & number 29 North Holly Street N/A not for publication

city, town Medford N/A vicinity of Second Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Jackson code 029

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> 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 Kenneth and George Ebert

street & number 301 West Sixth Street

city, town Medford N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97501

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jackson County Courthouse

street & number Eight and Oakdale Streets

city, town Medford state Oregon 97501

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Prop. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

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	N/A
<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 Fluhrer Bakery Building is a one to two-story structure, rectilinear in plan, constructed of reinforced concrete (photo #4). The main block of the building measures approximately 178 feet by 110 feet. A single-story boiler room extension on the north-west elevation, has an "L" shaped configuration roughly measuring 70 feet by 65 feet (photos #4 and 10). An extension on the southeast or West Main Street elevation measures 65 feet by 52 feet (photo #13). Paved surface parking areas at the intersection of West Sixth and North Holly Streets (4,650 square feet) and the intersection of West Main and North Holly Streets (2,340 square feet) complete the coverage of the one-half block site. Raised planting beds were added along the southeast elevation and to separate the parking areas from the public sidewalks. The building is a locally distinctive and early example of the Modernistic, or Art Deco style. The north half (110 feet by 140 feet) of the complex was built in 1933 (photo #1), with the southern section (108 feet by 160 feet) constructed in 1941 as a major addition (photo #2). The architect for both sections was Frank C. Clark. The construction in 1933 was completed by R. I. Stuart and Sons of Medford. Marshall Bessonette was the contractor in 1941.

The structure was built to serve as a commercial retail/wholesale bakery and regional headquarters for the Fluhrer Bakery, Inc., of southern Oregon and northern California. Between 1980 and 1982, it was renovated as Ebert's Art Centre Building, containing a restaurant, office space, a hair salon, and an art gallery and art supply business.

The Fluhrer Bakery Building is located on the northeast half of Block 67 of the original town of Medford, in Township 37 south, Range 2 west, Willamette Meridain, in Section 25 (25AD), Tax Lots 10100 and 11300. The site measures 110 feet by 300 feet. The site is bound by West Sixth, North Holly and West Main Streets.

The main elevation of the building fronts on North Holly Street, and is oriented to the northeast. The southwest or rear wall of the building is on the center line of an alley which bisects the block and runs the length of the former public alley right-of-way (photos #5 and 13).

The Fluhrer Bakery Building shares the block with the two-and three-story brick Cargill Court Apartments (photo #4), and a one-quarter block parking lot. The bakery building is located between Medford's Main Street retail district and civic center containing: the County Courthouse (John Link, 1931-32), the Justice Building, and the Jail. City Hall and the new Federal Building are within three blocks west and south of the Fluhrer Bakery Building. Library Park is directly across West Main Street (photo #2), and adjoining the park is Medford's 1911-1912 Carnegie Library (National Register). One block west of the bakery building is the five-story, brick Hotel Medford (Frank Clark, 1911) (photo #4), and across West Sixth Street on the north is the former United States Post Office and Courthouse, 1914-1915 (National Register) (photos #1 and 12). On the northeast corner of West Sixth and North Holly Streets is the Holly Theater (Frank Clark, 1930) (photo #12).

The retail district along West Main Street to the east contains a number of turn-of-the-century, one-, two-, and four-story brick commercial buildings. During the past decade several of these have undergone extensive renovation and adaption to specialty shops and professional offices. Most notable of these buildings was the four-story Liberty or Leverett Building (1907), 201 West Main Street, the first of Medford's commercial buildings to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

2

On the Fluhrer Bakery Building's northeast elevation, the facade, the 178 foot long wall plane, is broken by a 6 foot setback of the 1941 addition (photos #2, 3, and 4). The 70 foot length of the 1933 building, which projects to the property line, is divided into three bays (photo #1) separated by fluted pilasters crowned by finials containing a stylized motif created by the project architect (photo #6). The verticality of the low horizontal building is further stressed by the vertical scoring of smooth raked white stucco surface and the treatment of the parapet with the chevron or zigzag capping (photo #6), which is repeated under the windows. The shallow display window bays of fourteen foot high plate glass flanking a recessed glazed panel door with a transom (photo #1) have been replaced by windows on a flat plane containing several tinted panels. The seven bays of the 1941 addition (photo #2) repeat the wall surface treatment and detailing. The window treatment on this section is different in that the windows are flush with the wall surface and are four feet above the ground. The former industrial, multipaned, metal sash windows have been replaced with the tinted glass panels, yet they maintain the properties and pattern of openings on the elevation. The sixth bay from the south now serves as an entrance into the interior mall space. The original doorway for delivery trucks is still intact on the southern end of the elevation. The open space created by the 45 foot setback on the southeast end of the bakery building now serves as a parking area.

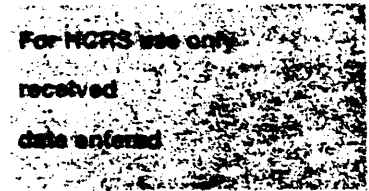
On the southeast or West Main Street elevation, the architectural detailing and finish materials continue (photos #12 and 13). The eastern section of this elevation is set back from the property line 52 feet, and is composed of three bays (photo #12). The two bays nearest North Holly Street continue to serve as windows with mullions dividing each opening into six sections. The third opening, narrower in width, is an entrance-way into the yet-to-be-completed retail or office space. The elevation at a right angle to this wall repeats the aforementioned configuration, yet the windows made use of glass blocks. The section of the building which projects to the property line on West Main Street is also divided into three bays, comprised of two windows and a doorway. Glass block salvaged in the recent remodeling is used to flank the newly installed tinted glass panels (photo #13).

The southwest or rear elevation once contained several window and door openings (photo #5), but due to fire code restrictions all have been infilled (photo #13). The architectural features, pilasters and chevron capping, continue on this elevation, but soon give way to the projection of the second story above the parapet wall on the original 1933 structure (photo #13).

The northwest elevation, fronting on West Sixth Street, is composed of several wall planes. It is here that the single-story extension, with the "L" shaped configuration, projects to the northwest property line and now contains a garage door installed where there had been a multi-paned industrial metal window. Here the many multipaned metal sash windows that wrapped around the building (photo #4) have been replaced with glass panels. The selection of the Modernistic or Art Deco design was befitting the highly automated, modern bakery which The Fluhrers were planning. Prior to the start of construction, the Mail-Tribune reported:

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page 3 a

A complete automatic control of the manufacturing process in both time and temperature will be one of the novel features of the new plant and found only in two other bakeries in Oregon, they being the two largest plants in Portland. A baking operation will be carried on with electricity and a six-inch conduit was found necessary to carry the service into the building, one of the largest electrical installations in the state.²³

The Mail-Tribune later carried an article which included a comment on the architecture of the bakery, and description of the original color treatment.

The building, whose design is from the new modern school of architecture, was designed by Frank Clark of this city, and the building is a tribute to the building craftsmen of this vicinity as none but local Jackson County residents were employed in its construction work. A very effective combination of black and white has been used in the color scheme and carries out the idea of a new white food factory of utmost cleanliness.²⁴

The window configuration was as important an element of the "modern" design as it was in the function of providing natural light and ventilation.

The front design of the building represents a radical departure from the ordinary type of construction in that no transom bars were used above the show windows. The plate glass windows thus formed are fourteen feet in height, and are among the largest windows of this type in the city. All plate glass, consisting of 25 separate windows and doors, was purchased from the Medford Planing Mill of this city. The steel sash glass was also installed by the Hansen firm. (photo #1)¹⁴

The grand opening occurred in October, 1933, and to prepare the public for the event, the Mail-Tribune offered another description of the building and its operation.

...the first sight of the building, especially after dark, will impress you with the classic beauty of its architecture, and the exceptional size and number of its modern windows, through which the brightly illuminated interior is plainly visible from Sixth Street. The beautiful front of the building, with its tall columns and ultra modern, very large plate glass windows, complete a building exterior that adds much to the beauty and dignity of the business district of Medford, and that Medford citizens can well be proud of.¹⁴

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page 3b

The paper went on to explain the interior.

But as impressive as the exterior of this modern bakery is, the interior is even more so. Beautiful, gleaming, glistening, white enamel ceiling and walls, set off by the polished hardwood floor, with workmen at their tasks in starched white uniforms (photo #1) attending the mammoth electric ovens, wrapping machines, conveyors, mixers, shapers, moulders, and bread trucks that fill the floor of the large building in orderly array. ¹⁴

The ground floor rooms contained the physical plant (boiler room) (photo #7), mixing, baking and packaging operations, employee dressing and shower rooms, and a retail store. The second floor was reserved for office space.

The original Fluhrer Bakery building of 1933 also provided commercial space for two other

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 4

Medford businesses, Dow's Cafe and a Gilmore Service Station.

The exact location of Dow's Cafe in the building is not known, but information on the appearance of the establishment in the Mail-Tribune indicates it was in the main structure, possibly facing North Holly Street.

In attractive quarters, made exceptionally light by the high plate glass windows, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Dow will open their new establishment to be known as Dow's Cafe in the Fluhrer Building Saturday.

Immaculately white walls, with the counters, stools, booths and tables in brown, form an attractive place for lunches, meals, and short orders to be prepared by the Dows. Two counters are in the cafe, with booths also on the ground floor. Upstairs on an attractive balcony, the tables are to be arranged. 14

The Gilmore Station was located at the corner of West Sixth and North Holly Streets (photo #1). Previously this had been the location of the Post Office Super Service Station. The Fluhrer Bakery Building had been designed and constructed around this business. During the construction of the Fluhrer Bakery, the service station also underwent a remodeling, installation of new equipment, car washing facilities, and a hydraulic lift. A red and cream color scheme of the Gilmore Company was used throughout the station and building.

In the late 1930s William H. Fluhrer purchased the William I. Vawter house and its quarter block site on the corner of West Main and North Holly Streets from Etta M. Vawter for expansion purposes. The Vawter house, an impressive three-story dwelling designed in the Colonial Revival style, had stood at Holly and Main since its construction in 1907.

Since William I. Vawter's death in 1916 it had been leased and used by the Rogue River Valley University Club. With Fluhrer's plans for expansion of the bakery, the Vawter house would have to be razed or moved to a new site. The house, one of the town's most impressive, was to be moved a block and a half to the southeast corner of South Holly and West Eight Streets. The move was well covered by the Mail-Tribune.

July 13, 1941

Heine Fluhrer, the demon baker, has started to move a pioneer house a block. There is not a screwdriver in his repertoire of screwdrivers big enough to do a thing about it.

July 20, 1941

The Heine Fluhrer house is slowly shifting to the south, while losing the race to the snail, with the turtle second.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

5

July 23, 1941

The Heine Fluhrer house continues to wend its way down Holly Street to its ultimate destination. Everything has been done to accelerate it, except to hire a speed idiot to honk his \$65.00 horn at it, peevishly.

July 25, 1941

The Heine Fluhrer house has about reached its resting place, thanks to a horse and faith that moved a mountain. It is the consensus of opinion of sidewalk superintendents the horse should be rewarded with a month's rest in the first floor apartment that gets the morning sun.

July 28, 1941

A move has been launched to have the horse engaged in valiantly moving the Heine Fluhrer house made an honorary member of the Sheriff's Posse, and have Arabian blood in his veins.

July 31, 1941

The Heine Fluhrer house will soon be at rest, and the horse that did most of the moving is looking forward to one also.

August 3, 1941

I finally made it, 'whinnied' the old horse, engaged the past month in pulling the Heine Fluhrer house to its new location.

August 10, 1941

The Vawter house, moved by Heine Fluhrer, the demon baker, is located on its new foundation, and hopes it never has to move again. ³²

On August 12, 1941, construction began on the \$50,000 addition to the bakery building.

The addition will have a frontage of 108 feet on Holly Street, and a depth of 104 feet, extending from the present bakery building to the service station area at Main and Holly. It will be principally one-story, though a small part of it will be two-stories, Mr. Fluhrer said. It will occupy the area formerly occupied by the Vawter apartment house which Mr. Fluhrer moved...

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

6

The addition will be of concrete and steel construction and will conform to the style of the present building, of which it will form an integral part. It will be set back seven feet from the sidewalk, however, in order to break the long frontage line, and to provide space for a flower garden. Marshall Bessonette is the builder. (photo #2) ²⁵

The sizable addition to the Fluhrer Bakery Building was a direct result of the population growth in the region, an improved economy stimulated by the war in Europe, and the expansion of the Fluhrer Bakery, Inc., which now owned branch operations in Yreka and Eureka, California, and Klamath Falls, Oregon. The eight year old main plant had been outgrown, but would continue to serve as the main plant and headquarters of the company's operations.

The present building will be utilized solely as the bread department and the cake, packing and shipping departments will be moved to the addition, Mr. Fluhrer explained. All trucks will be housed in the addition, and will be loaded directly from the wrapping machines, this innovation eliminating one operation step, he related.

The addition will more than double the present floor space. With two shifts on the job, the builder expects to complete the addition in 75 days, Mr. Fluhrer said. ²⁵

While the Fluhrer Bakery Building's exterior has remained intact architecturally, the interior has experienced substantial change (photos #8 and 11). The remodeling was due in part to the deteriorated state of the former offices, bakery and retail shop (photo #7), and a need on the part of the new owners to redesign office and retail floor space marketable in downtown Medford. The second floor was also rebuilt and now serves as two separate residential apartments for the families of Kenneth and George Ebert.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1933, 1941 **Builder/Architect** Architect: Frank C. Clark
 Builders: R. I. Stuart and Sons (1933)
 Marshall Bessonette (1941)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fluhrer Bakery Building at 29 North Holly Street in Medford, Oregon, occupies a half block between Main and Sixth Streets in the downtown core. Library Park lies across Main Street to the south. The United States Post Office and Court House (1915), a National Register property, lies across Sixth Street to the north. The original main volume and its boiler room wing, essentially one story in height, were built on the northerly end of the site in 1933. Constructed of reinforced concrete with white painted stucco exterior, the building conveyed the modernity of an automated plant. The large plate glass windows of its facade were fitted in steel sash, and low-relief exterior detailing in the Modernistic style included zig zag parapet coping accented in black, a zig zag string course, and finial-topped, fluted pilasters bearing the signature motif of the architect, Frank Chamberlain Clark. Built as the regional headquarters of the Fluhrer Bakery Company, the plant was expanded in 1941 by an addition on the south which was similarly designed and detailed by Frank Clark. Upon its completion, the Fluhrer Bakery was one of the largest and most up-to-date plants of its kind in the state.

Construction and initial staffing of the Fluhrer Bakery was carried out by local labor paid in accord with the minimum wage scale subsequently set by the National Recovery Act, and the enterprise was thus considered an important contribution to local economy in the midst of the Great Depression. Founders of the business were German emigrant John A. Fluhrer and his son, William Heine Fluhrer. The Fluhrers began their enterprise at a different location in Medford under the name Colonial Bakery in 1922. The company was sold by the Fluhrer family in 1962, and ten years later the plant was closed. The building was stripped of its equipment and used chiefly for storage until its acquisition in 1980 by the current owners, who subsequently adapted the building for use as an art supply center. Partly an energy conservation measure, and partly to expand the display window space essential to any retail operation, the multi-paned industrial window sash in north and south wings were removed and replaced with plate glass with mullions which echo the tripartite membering of display windows in the retail section of the original main volume. For the most part, glass block remains where it was installed in window openings of the 1941 addition.

While the Fluhrer Bakery Building meets National Register criterion "a" as the headquarters of the leading bakery in southern Oregon and northernmost California for three decades, nothing evoking the technical process remains in the building today. While the building is significant under criterion "b" for its association with William H. Fluhrer, one of the leading businessmen of the Rogue River Valley from 1922 to his untimely death in 1948, it is not the only building in Medford associated with Fluhrer. Frank C. Clark, architect of the bakery, designed a fashionable Tudor style house for the company founder which still stands. The Fluhrer Bakery Building is primarily significant under criterion "c" as the first and one of the most distinctive of five examples of Modernistic architecture in Medford. Modernistic architecture enjoyed a brief period of popularity in the Rogue Valley following completion of the bakery, despite the limited amount of construction undertaken there during the Depression. The principal works in this style were designed by Frank

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Medford, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	0	5	1	0	2	7	5	4	6	8	5	6	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification The Fluhrer Bakery Building is located in SE 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 25, Township 37 South, Range 2 West, W.M. in Medford, Jackson County, Oregon. It occupies Tax Lot 10100 and Tax Lot 11300, Block 67 of the Original Plat of Medford. The parcel occupied by the building measures 110 X 300 feet. Map Reference

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries 37 2W 25 AD.

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title L. Scott Clay

organization N/A date September 9, 1982

street & number 407 Park Avenue telephone 503-772-6519

city or town Medford state Oregon 97501

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

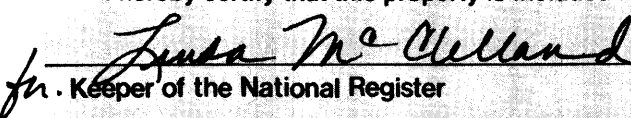
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

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 3-21-83

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
 date 5-16-83
Keeper of the National Register
Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page 2

Clark and his partner, Robert Keeney. Two of the five examples were merely facade remodelings.

The Fluhrer Bakery Building was the first of the Art Deco, or Modernistic buildings erected in the city of Medford during the 1930s. Due to the poor state of the economy during the Depression and lack of investment money to be spent on new construction, most commercial building improvements of the period consisted of storefront remodelings.

The Art Deco style, introduced at the 1925 Exposition des Arts Decoratifs in Paris, was untried in Medford's commercial core before 1933. The style's clean lines and surfaces seemed most appropriate for the design of a modern "electrically" operated bakery. The architect, Frank Clark, was one of the first professionally trained architects to practice in the Rogue Valley. He arrived in the valley in 1903 with a commission to design an Administration Building for the Normal School in Ashland.² His architectural practice spanned the better part of the first half of the 20th century. He designed numerous residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings throughout the valley until his retirement in the 1940s. The majority of Clark's work was carried out in the Colonial Revival style or period styles. Prime examples of the former are the Chappel-Swedenburg House (1904), 990 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland; Delroy Getchel House (1916), 1121 South Oakdale Avenue, Medford; and the Clark-Jackson House (1930), 1917 East Main Street, Medford. Other noteworthy examples of his work are the Shingle Style George Taverner House (1904), 912 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland; the California Mission style Ashland High School (1912) (extensively remodeled c. 1970), 885 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland; the Craftsman style Ralph Burdwell House (1912), 1002 South Oakdale Avenue, Medford; the Chicago-Commercial style Hotel Medford, (1911), 406 West Main Street, Medford, and the Tudor style A.S.V. Carpenter House (1927), 1677 Old Stage Road, Medford.

The Fluhrer Bakery Building was Clark's first known use of the Modernistic style. The style was used for a few remodelings of commercial building facades on Main Street during the 1930s.¹ The Bear Creek Orchards packing house, designed by Clark and completed about 1938, was the second of Medford's three prime examples of Modernistic architecture. Clark designed the Littrell Building (319 East Sixth Street) in the Modernistic style in the 1940s.

One of the notable elements of Clark's design for the Fluhrer Bakery Building is the detailing on the finial crowning the pilasters. This motif of applied ornament was used on several of his commercial buildings of the late 1920s and 1930s. Clark had seen a similar design element used by the Portland architectural firm Tourtellotte and Hummel on the Lithia Springs Hotel (Mark Anthony Hotel) (1924-25), 212 East Main Street, Ashland, where they were referred to as "Little Turtles" after their originator, John E. Tourtellotte. After slight modification, they were soon adopted by Clark and incorporated into his designs under the new name of "Little Clarks" (photo #6).

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page 3

By 1933 the full economic, social and political impact of the "Great Depression" had hit the Rogue Valley. New construction was nearly non-existent; many Medford and valley residents were out of work, and the lumber industry had come to a standstill. The political unrest of the national level was occurring in the valley with the formation of the Good Government Congress, which stated that its objective was to put its people in elected and appointed city and county offices.⁴ In March, Leweley Banks, leader of GGC, shot and killed officer George Prescott, who held a warrant for Banks's arrest on charges stemming from a "fixed" election and theft of the voters' ballots.⁵ The tensions in the valley had to end. It was necessary for the community's business and civic leaders to effect change.

In May the Fluhrer family's plan to construct new bakery facilities was announced in the Mail-Tribune.

Feeling confident that the depression is over, and that now is the time to expand business concerns in view of better times to come, the Colonial Bakery, Inc., with W. H. Fluhrer as manager, will erect a new building at the southwest corner of Sixth and Holly Streets, with work to start tomorrow, according to an announcement made by Fluhrer yesterday.

Decision of the Colonial Bakery to build at this time was made with conviction that construction costs are as low now as they will ever be, that economic conditions are going to improve from now on, and that a larger baking plant will be needed to care for increased business.⁶

The Fluhrer Bakery was the first major construction to occur in Medford, with the exception of the Jackson County Courthouse, which was built 1931-1932, using local WPA labor.

The [Fluhrer Bakery] building is the first of any consequence to be launched in the business section in three years.

The work force necessary for the operation of the bakery also was increased, as was reported in the Mail-Tribune.

In keeping with adoption of the National Recovery Act (NRA) and the President's re-employment agreement, W. H. Fluhrer of the Colonial Bakery last night issued a call for applications for positions in the bakery.⁸

In an effort to provide jobs and improve the local economy, only local contractors and laborers were employed in the construction of the bakery. Although the contract had been finalized prior to the NRA, the project was built upon those guidelines.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

4

All work on the building is being carried on under the NRA code and a minimum of 40¢ per hour for common labor is being paid to workers. Although the general contract was made this spring before the advent of the National Recovery Act, and was based on a low wage scale, the amount of the contract was voluntarily increased last month by Fluhrer's Bakery to a sufficient amount to allow the contractor, R. I. Stuart, to pay the minimum wage scale set by the NRA.⁹

During the first half of the 20th century, R. I. Stuart and Sons was Medford's largest construction company. Colonel Richard Irwin Stuart arrived in Medford from California in 1910. He received construction contracts for many of the town's largest and most important commercial, industrial and institutional buildings and structures. These projects included the Sparta Building (1911), East Main and Riverside; the United States Post Office and Courthouse (1914-15), 310 West Sixth Street; Elks Temple (1915), 202 North Central Avenue; Medford Sanitarium (1917), now Cargill Court Apartments, 331 West Sixth Street; the Armory (1924, razed), North Bartlett Street; the Community Hospital (1925), now the Century Building, 843 East Main Street; Craterian Theater (1925), 23 South Central Avenue; Jackson Hotel (1925, razed), South Central Avenue; Medford City Hall (1927, razed), North Central Avenue, and the Medford High School (1930-31), now Medford Mid High School, 815 South Oakdale Avenue. The Medford firm of Tru-Mix Construction Company is a successor to the R. I. Stuart and Sons Company.¹⁰

The Fluhrer Bakery Building was constructed for John A. and William H. Fluhrer, father and son, in the fall of 1933. John Fluhrer was born in Merchingen, Germany, April 9, 1868. As a boy he apprenticed as a baker, and at the age of 15 he came to the United States. After two years in New Jersey, he moved to Rathdrum, Idaho, and established himself in a bakery business. In 1892 he settled in Spokane, Washington for two years before traveling to Trail, British Columbia, where he was engaged in business for 17 years. In 1898 he married Elizabeth Hoefler. Their first child, William, was born in Trail, in 1899. Subsequently, two daughters, Louise and Ruth, were born. Following a family trip to Europe in the 1910s, the Fluhrers settled in Silverton, Oregon, and operated a bakery there between 1919 and 1921.¹¹ William was educated in the public schools and Saylor Boarding School for Boys before attending Washington State College, Pullman, to major in journalism. Before entering into the family bakery business he worked for a Spokane newspaper, and did some magazine work.^{3 12}

In July, 1922, the Fluhrer family purchased the Pullman Baking Company, located on North Central Avenue in Medford and operated by Rudolph Scholz.¹³ The business was renamed The Colonial Baking Company. After operating the North Central plant for a year, the Fluhrers moved into the I. A. Webb Building at 222 East Main Street and remodeled it into a bakery and retail store.¹⁴ The Fluhrer family lived in apartments above the bakery.^{15 16} In 1925 a full basement was excavated under the building to add to the capacity of the plant.¹⁴ The northern California business of the bakery had grown to such proportions that a branch bakery was established in February, 1929, at Yreka, which served as headquarters for two routes that included Yreka, Montague, Gazelle, Weed, Shasta City (Mount Shasta) and Dunsuir. Shipments were also made to all points in the Scott and Klamath River Valleys.^{3 14} By 1930 the business had outgrown its quarters, and the cake department of the bakery was moved

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

5

into a building across the alley from the Main Street plant.¹⁴

In May, 1930, the Colonial Baking Company purchased the initial 110 foot by 140 foot lot on which the bakery building now stands, from Etta M. Vawter for \$20,000.¹⁷ The site had contained service yards, a garden plot, garage, wood shed, and a carriage house for the Vawter house, which remained on the front portion of the site, fronting on West Main Street and the Library Park. The Vawter house at this time was being used as a club house by the Rogue River Valley University Club.¹⁸

W. H. Fluhrer and his new bride continued to reside above the bakery on East Main Street.¹⁹ John and Elizabeth Fluhrer commissioned architect Frank Clark to design a family dwelling in the Tudor style. The home was built in Wellington Heights, a fashionable new residential area in the hills of east Medford.^{20 21}

Despite the worsening of the depression, the bakery continued operations ("people have to eat bread") and, along with other local businesses, advertised its support of national and local programs.

We will accept C of C script certificates as well as our own.
You may also present them to any of our agents who will be glad to accept them -- Fluhrer's.²²

On June 5, 1933, construction of the new bakery building on the corner of North Holly and West Sixth Streets was begun. The public announcement was made by William H. Fluhrer, then manager of the operation. The building was to be completed by August 1. Although the cost of the new building was not disclosed, it was said to be in excess of \$10,000.⁷

By September, 1933, plans were being made for the move from the old bakery location on East Main Street, and workmen were rushing to complete the building.

A large force of workmen is busily employed on the new Fluhrer Bakery building on 6th and Holly in an effort to complete the building to the point where moving operations may begin this weekend. It is expected that it will take approximately two weeks to complete the entire moving process.²³

Three weeks later there was a flurry of activity again in preparation for the grand opening.

Workmen were busily engaged over the weekend putting on the finishing touches to the new Fluhrer's Bakery building which will be opened for public inspection next Saturday in a gala grand opening event.²⁴

The grand opening and public inspection was held on Saturday, October 21, 1933.

Later that year, in December, John A. Fluhrer, President and founder of the Colonial Baking Company, now Fluhrer Baking Company, Inc., died at the age of 65.¹¹

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

6

William H. ("Heine") Fluhrer became President of the growing company. Heine continued to expand, purchasing and opening operations in Klamath Falls, Oregon (1935); Eureka, California (1938), and Grants Pass, Oregon (1943).³

In the summer of 1941, Heine Fluhrer ambitiously entered into the construction of a major addition to the home plant operation and regional headquarters of the Fluhrer Bakery, Inc., by moving the Vawter house off its site at the corner of Holly and Main, and building a \$50,000 addition. The addition more than doubled the floor space of the plant. Fluhrer had acquired the additional property for expansion in the late 1930s.²⁵

Excavation for the addition had to be done at night when the equipment needed could be borrowed from its daytime job at the municipal airport, which was being expanded as WPA project.²⁵

Shortly after the completion of the addition in November, the United States entered into the Second World War, and Heine Fluhrer signed up for the Air Transport Command (1942-46), leaving his wife, Margaret, in charge of the new plant and the regional operation.¹⁹ Following the war Heine Fluhrer returned to the bakery business and continued his involvement in the community as president of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association, president of the Medford Investment Company, president of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, and member of the University Club, Elks, Masons, Hillah Shrine, Young Men's Christian Association, and the Lutheran Church.³ Following substantial local support, he entered into politics in May, 1948, and was nominated to the Republican ticket in Jackson County for the State Senate.¹²

On the third weekend in August, Heine hosted a gathering of the state Republican party elected officials and nominees at his Lake of the Woods summer home. Sunday, August 22, 1948, the plane which he was piloting crashed into the lake, killing Heine and his three passengers: State Representative Earle Johnson, Benton County; H.H. Evans, Representative nominee, Lincoln County; and Representative John R. Snellstrom, Lane County.^{12 26 27}

The Rogue River Valley had lost one of its most dynamic and colorful figures.

William Henry Fluhrer, 'Heinie', as he was affectionately known to literally thousands, had borne what seemed a charmed life. He survived service in World War II unscathed, and in the years since his arrival here in 1922, found time while building a fortune in the bakery business, to engage in such somewhat hazardous sports as motorboat racing and airplane flying.

In the prime of a vigorous manhood, almost a story-book-like figure, William Henry Fluhrer was probably known to more people in Southern Oregon than any other single resident. Because of his successful business and sports activities he had become almost a legend, a symbol of accomplishment. To whatever project he put his keen mind and seemingly inexhaustible energy, success was well nigh certainly assured.²⁸

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 7

Once again, Margaret Ames Fluhrer was in charge as president of the Fluhrer Bakery, Inc., of southern Oregon and northern California. In 1962 the baking operation was sold to a company in Stockton, California. It was later sold to Williams, Inc., of Eugene, Oregon, and the building was leased to Williams.¹⁹ Fifty years of baking bread in downtown Medford came to an end in July, 1972, when Williams closed the downtown baking plant and relocated its operations elsewhere in the city.²⁹

The plant was less regularly maintained between 1972 and 1980 when it was used for storage and as an outlet for the Williams Bakery Thrift Store.¹⁹

In 1980 Margaret Fluhrer put the half block site and the building up for sale. Consideration had been given to razing the building to make the property more marketable.¹⁹ Kenneth and George Ebert, brothers, purchased the building in the summer of 1980, and began working to renovate the Fluhrer Bakery Building into Ebert's Art Centre. Their intent was to retain the character of the Modernistic design while at the same time providing needed retail and office space in Medford's downtown.³⁰

The Eberts' effort to improve the appearance of the old retail district and boost the local economy in the early 1980s was similar in purpose and action to the efforts of the Fluhrers nearly 50 years ago. The opening of the newly remodeled Ebert's Art Centre building was observed on April 2, 1981.³¹

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

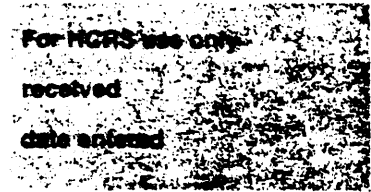
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Page 2

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page 3

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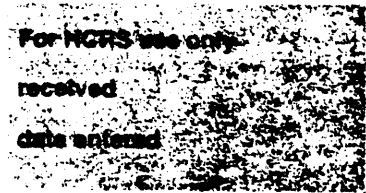
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**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Item number 9 Page 4

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