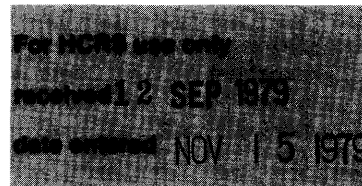


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



1. Name

historic Newell, (Edwin) House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 591 SW G Street _____ not for publication

city, town Grants Pass _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 4th

state Oregon code 41 county Josephine code 033

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Doyle D. Renfroe

street & number 591 SW G Street

city, town Grants Pass _____ vicinity of _____ state Oregon 97526

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Josephine County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Grants Pass _____ state Oregon 97526

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____ has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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 Edwin Newell House is a two-story building of box and balloon-frame construction, T-shaped in plan and oriented laterally (facing north) on its lot at the southeast corner of G and Pine Streets in Grants Pass, Oregon. The main block of the house, the majority of which--at least--is understood to have been built by carpenter/cabinet-maker Edwin Newell ca. 1885, has a shingled gable roof, the ridge line of which is broken by two brick stove flues. The whole is clad with horizontal drop siding and rests on a foundation of brick piers spaced four feet on center. A porch with turned uprights and railings at upper and lower decks extends across the north face of the stem of the "T", sheltering a transomed entry at the inside corner. Aligned above the ground story entry is a transomed door which opens from the second story onto the upper porch deck. Matching the Gothic proportions of the house, window openings are tall and, on the north face and east end, are typically paired. Window sash are of the double-hung type with one over one lights. The false shutters are more recent additions to the exterior surface. Exterior trim is minimal, consisting of plain boxed eaves, simple frieze and corner boards.

Inside the main block, a bedroom lies to the east of the central stairhall, and a front parlor and diningroom lie to the west. Upstairs, three bedrooms are grouped around the stairhall, repeating the ground story floor plan. All rooms in this block have ceiling heights of 10 feet. A single-story bathroom addition of ca. 1900 fills the corner between the stem and bar of the "T" on the south, or rear face of the main block.

There is some evidence that the single-story, gable-roofed kitchen ell telescoping from the south end of the bar of the "T" may have pre-dated construction of the main block. Window sash in the kitchen wing contain four lights over four, and box construction, as opposed to balloon frame construction, was employed in this wing. Tongue and groove wainscoting, three feet in height, lines the interior. The ceiling is finished with tongue and groove boards.

The kitchen ell, in turn, has a lean-to addition on its south end to enclose a pantry and storeroom. A gable-roofed service porch and woodroom stems from the southwest corner of the ell, completing the utility wing of the house. The entire wing is clapboarded and finished in the same manner as the exterior of the main block.

A second stage of construction, following the kitchen wing, appears to have been that of the downstairs rooms of the stem of the "T." The diningroom and front parlor are of plank, or box construction also. In these rooms, 1x6" planks were surfaced on the interior with heavy canvas, then papered. The stem of the "T" and the upstairs rooms are understood to have been added in balloon frame construction by Newell ca. 1885. In these areas, interior walls are finished with lath and plaster, and picture moldings, baseboard, and simple window and door trim are used throughout.

The stairway consists of seventeen risers with a landing and mahogany handrail and turned balusters and newell posts. Pine floor boards were used throughout the main block, with the exception of the entry stairhall, which now has hardwood flooring added at a later date.

Originally, the house occupied two lots, the northerly of which was the site of the house, and the rear lot contained the barn and sheds. The rear lot was sold during the 1940s and all the outbuildings were subsequently removed. Recently, the original well was located. It is a driven well with a hand pump and is being restored for use by the current owner.

(continued)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED 12 SEP 1979

DATE ENTERED

Newell (Edwin) House, Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

The box hedge which once lined the street sides of the property is no longer standing. Possibly it was sacrificed to later street and sidewalk improvements. But the stately old oak tree centered in the dooryard and the mature twin maples in the Pine Street parking strip still shade the property as they did in the historic period, and, in fact, together with the house, they provide a visual focal point at the five-cornered intersection created by the development of a diagonal plat north of G Street.

Among future plans under consideration by the present owner are steps to meet certain building code requirements. The brick piers which have so well contributed to the soundness and longevity of the house to date, for example, no longer meet the local code, and the foundation will be filled in with cement block. The vertical weather skirting boards will be replaced in kind. The house is in sound condition, generally, and is free from obvious dry rot and settling. The interior walls may require some plaster repair in order that plaster board added in recent years may be removed, and the floors will be refinished.

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

Specific dates ca. 1885

Builder/Architect

Edwin Newell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The two-story frame house built by Grants Pass carpenter/cabinet-maker Edwin Newell ca. 1885 is significant to the community as one of the few homes remaining on G Street which date back to the time when G Street--originally Front Street--was the main street of town. Remarkably well-preserved, the house lies on the westerly edge of the modern-day central business district in a neighborhood which is essentially residential, but where multi-family dwelling units are beginning to appear. Edwin Newell had a leading role in the construction of Newman United Methodist Church (1889), a National Register property located three blocks to the northeast of the Newell House. Newell occupied the house which he built for himself until his demise, ca. 1913, and shortly thereafter the property passed from the hands of his heirs. Despite the subsequent changes of ownership and an interlude of use as a maternity hospital, commencing ca. 1926, the house has remained unaltered externally, and interior modifications are of a merely minor or superficial sort. While examples of straightforward late 19th century houses of this type in Oregon are numerous, this one is noteworthy because of the combined circumstances of its association with a figure of some consequence in local history, its unaltered state, and its stabilizing influence at a key intersection in a residential neighborhood adjacent to the community's downtown core. It is a choice representative of a common type.

Edwin Newell, a cabinet-maker and carpenter, and his wife, Sarah, were married in Williamsport, Indiana in 1878, and they emigrated to Oregon ca. 1880. Of their six children, the last four were born in the house at 591 G Street (originally Front Street) in Grants Pass. There were: Evelyn, b. 1885; Fred C., B. 1889; Harry L., b. 1892; and Olive Pearl, b. 1895. According to family tradition, word reached Newell of the birth of his first son, Fred, while he was at work on the steeple of United Methodist Church, three blocks away from his home. Although he had moved onto the nominated property by 1885, at least, Newell did not receive title to the house and property until 1889, according to Josephine County Deed Records. Deed records show also that the earliest recorded owner was William Bilger, who received a patent on the land in 1872. In 1884, the property was sold to B. A. Williams, who in turn eventually transferred his interest to Newell.

About 1913, following her husband's death, Newell's widow sold the property. It was acquired by a railroad engineer named Blackman. Remarkably, the subsequent train of owners made little impact upon the structural integrity of the house. In 1926 the house was acquired by Margaret Tensley, a private nurse who for a time operated a maternity hospital in the house.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Personal interviews: Pearl Olive Wilson, daughter of Edwin Newell, Mary 27, 1978; Viola LeGester, occupant of house 1941-1959; Margaret Keyts, who was born in house in 1927. Jackson County Deed Records Josephine County Deed Recrods, Vol. 8, page 131; Vol. 46, page 593.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one (85x96')

Quadrangle name Grants Pass, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A

1	0	4	7	2	5	7	5	4	6	9	8	5	0	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 Beginning at the NW corner of Lot 2, Block 1, H.B. Miller's Addition to the town of Grants Pass, and on the south line of G Street, thence south along the west line of said Block 1 85', thence east and parallel with the south line of G Street 96', thence north and parallel with the west line of Block 1 85' to the south line of G Street, thence west 96' to the point of beginning in Josephine County, Oregon

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Doyle D. Renfroe

organization _____ date July 17, 1978

street & number 591 SW G Street telephone 503/582-1737

city or town Grants Pass state Oregon 97526

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *David A. Talbot*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date August 27, 1979

For HCERS use only

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

Carol D. Shull date 11-15-79
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Kristen O'Connell* date 11/14/79
Chief of Administration