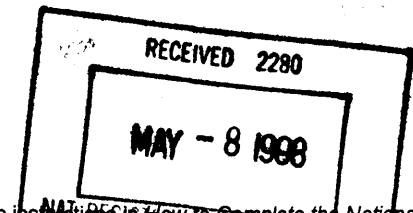


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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.

1. Name of Property

historic name CLARK-MCCONNELL HOUSE

other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 961 S E 8<sup>th</sup> Street  N/A not for publication

city or town Grants Pass  N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Josephine code 033 zip code 97526

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jane Hamch April 25, 1998

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
  - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall Signature of Keeper Date of Action 6/3/98

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**CLARK - McCONNELL HOUSE (1936)**961 SE Eighth Street  
Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon**COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**

The English Cottage built for insurance broker M. D. Clark in 1936 in Grants Pass, Oregon occupies a wooded site of just over a half acre at the foot of SE Eighth Street, on the north bank of the Rogue River. It is proposed for nomination under Criterion C as a notably intact, good, representative example of its architectural type locally.

Having the economical air of a well-crafted builder's version of a published plan, the one-and-a-half-story house of wood frame construction rises as a core volume with perpendicular wing enclosed by a dominating, steep double-pitched roof. The core volume is given the picturesque asymmetry which is a hallmark of the romantic period styles based on English and Norman manor houses of the 16th and 17th centuries. The west slope of the roof of the core volume is notched at the southwest corner, where, set back from the front wall plane, an enclosed portico with round-arched portal is sheltered by a continuation of the west roof slope. Overall ground plan dimensions are 36 x 36 feet. Offset from the rear, northeast corner is a flat-roofed, single-bay garage attachment with raked shingle siding which is integral to the original development, although the proponent points to evidence that its roof line has been altered.

The exterior of the house as a whole is clad with raked shingle siding, with stucco and decorative half timbering accenting the notched entrance porch corner. In keeping with the English Cottage style, the exterior was further enriched by the polychrome effect of gable peak shingles painted umber in contrast to the dark brown shingles of the general body. The gables have close verges and boxed cornices. All trimwork is painted white. There is an outside brick end chimney with stepped shoulders on the west wing. Typical windows, some of which are grouped in pairs, are double hung sash with six-over-one lights. A pedimented gable dormer lights bedroom space above the living room in the west wing. In the south facade, which directly overlooks the Rogue and Riverside Park beyond, fixed-light picture windows admit natural light and the view to the living and dining rooms.

The interior of the house is finished simply with plaster walls and ceilings, hardwood floors and little or none of the built in cabinetry which often is associated with high style modern Arts and

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
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Crafts architecture. Detailing is restrained, consisting of plain baseboard, mahogany picture molding, window and door trim, a rounded entrance door, internal French doors, rounded archways, and a ceramic tile hearth and firebox in the livingroom which evidently had no mantelpiece.

This commission was undertaken in the Great Depression after an initial period of arrested building activity. The house is shown to have been coincident with a local trend resulting from a mortgage workshop sponsored by the Federal Housing Authority. Because of the promotion, Grants Pass experienced a minor residential building boom in the southeast sector in 1936. The well-researched developmental history of the property shows that the original investor was M. D. Clark, a retired banker who, with his wife, had followed his son to the West Coast from Arkansas, first to California and eventually to Grants Pass. To recoup losses in the stock market crash of 1929, Clark reentered the business world, founding Clark Insurance Agency, which his son Marvin soon joined, as did, eventually, his grandsons. The agency remains a local family owned concern. No architect or builder has been identified with the house to date, though it has been speculated that the local contractor LeMoss was responsible for carrying out plans brought by Clark from California. A photograph which appeared in the Grants Pass *Courier* for July 27, 1936 shows the house was substantially complete by that time. The Clarks left the property after only a few years residing there.

Since 1995, the house has been owned and rehabilitated by Arden McConnell, daughter of a subsequent owner, Helen McConnell, who owned and lived in the house in the 1940s and 1950s and rented it to others for a time after relocating to California.

The application provides a good discussion of the origins of the English Cottage style and compares the Clark-McConnell House with three other comparable properties identified in the city cultural resource inventory. Within the select comparative field, the Clark-McConnell House is considered the outstanding builder's version of a wood-shingle English Cottage.

Clark-McConnell House  
Name of Property

Josephine County, Oregon  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

none

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic; Single Dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic; Single Dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Revival; Tudor Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete; Poured Perimeter

walls Wood; Shingle

Stucco

roof Wood; Shingle

other Brick [chimney]

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

*Please see attached continuation sheets*

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The one and one-half story wood-framed Clark-McConnell House was constructed in 1936. Long associated with two prominent families in the Grants Pass business community, the resource is exemplary as one of best English Cottage style dwellings in the City of Grants Pass and is proposed for nomination under Criterion "C" to the National Register of Historic Places.

### LOCATION:

The Clark-McConnell House is located on the north bank of the Rogue River at the extreme end of Southeast Eighth Street in the city limits of Grants Pass, Josephine County, Oregon. The site, roughly a parallelogram in shape, contains two separate tax lots, and combined runs approximately 240' along SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, including a 17.6' access easement [Rogue View Lane] that runs the north property line. The site has a depth of 120' along the river bank.<sup>1</sup> The southernmost 100' [ +/- ] of the lot is steeply banked toward the river's edge. Throughout, large trees and mature landscaping create a heavily shaded setting that adding substantially to the character of the setting. The subject parcel is legally described on Josephine County Assessors Plat 36-5-19-1-1 as lots 4600 and 4700 and occupies approximately 0.54 acres in total area.

With the exception of the steep slope to the north bank of the Rogue River, the site is flat. Well maintained lawn areas are located on all sides of the house but the north, which includes both a gravel parking and driveway areas with a dirt landscaped bed along Rogue View Lane. Fencing is mixed, with non-historic white picket (a 1995 replacement of an earlier fence of similar design) at the SW corner of house site and open rustic-style fencing lining the NW corner parking area and the easement access. (See attached Site Plan) The Clark-McConnell House is located just south of "M Street," the southernmost boundary of the original Grants Pass Townsite plat, and is approximately 0.5 miles from the downtown core area.

Uses in the immediate area are predominately one and two-story multi-family residential to the west with a large vacant parcel to the north. A boat landing associated with a nearby hotel is located at the foot of the dirt continuation of the SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street roadbed, just west of the property line along the river. Small non-historic residential uses are to the east and the large, city-owned, Riverside Park occupies the opposite bank of the Rogue River. The former "Riverside School" rebuilt in 1937 after a fire, is located at the SW

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 8 of the this nomination for comments on the 30' x 96' railroad easement at the SW corner of the property.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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corner of the intersection of M and S E 8<sup>th</sup> streets. No longer owned by the school district and now known as the Family Resource Center, the simple Art Deco-style building houses a variety of services for young children.

In general, the overall setting of the Clark-McConnell House, located at the extreme end of a non-through street that terminates at the Rogue River, may be characterized as a quiet tree-shaded enclave with comparatively little traffic or other interruption.

### EXTERIOR:

The Clark-McConnell House rises from a poured concrete foundation, parged in a natural stucco-coat. Exterior siding is predominately original scored or ribbed wood shingles, laid in standard courses with 14" [+/-] to weather. All shingles are stained a deep brown, the original color of the structured.<sup>2</sup> Extreme gable ends are of decorative 8" wide horizontal siding, painted in the original umber brown. At the entrant porch, below the main roof volume, walls are of a heavy stucco coat over wood frame with mock "half-timbered" surface decorations, painted in the original rose tones.

The roof of the house is essentially two large gables of varying height and pitch with the resultant "hipped" intersection visible on the north elevation. Cap shingles project approximately 10" beyond the wall plain on all ridges, a typical feature of the English Cottage Style, although non-original to this structure. On the south-facing elevation the wall surface is extended approximately 10" beyond the arris of the SE corner, creating a small "wing" or buttress-like feature. A small gable dormer is located on the south-facing elevation. On the west elevation, a massive brick chimney with a 24" wide by 18" deep [+/-] throat rises beyond the uppermost ridge of the structure and visually balances the volume of the large, south-facing, gable end. The chimney is built of "rag" brick, with vertical scored textures fired into the exposed face, and has stepped shoulders as it reduces in section from its chamfer-edged parged concrete base. Each chimney shoulder is capped with a cast-concrete plate, matching the appearance of the base.

The windows and trim of the Clark-McConnell House are all original with the dominate design being 6/1 wood-sash double hung windows set both singly and in pairs. Two large fixed pane "picture" windows open onto the south and are also original to the structure. Exterior windows surrounds are a rather idiosyncratic three-part design with two "built-

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<sup>2</sup> All exterior colors and other features deemed "original" date at least from February 1945 and the purchase of the property by the McConnell family, supported by oral information from Clark family members.

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up" frames applied over a 4" wide base, creating a "u-section" profile. All window trim, as well the trim surround at the eaves, is painted white. Eaves on gable-end elevations are minimal and other roof edges terminate in a small boxed eave.

The main entry is via a recessed "entrant" porch below the extension of the main roof plane. Surfaced in stucco, this area offers two arched openings; the main entry arch leads to the covered porch, with its original stained and scored concrete floor colored a pale red, while the second opening, approximately 14" x 24," provides a small window looking out onto the River. The main entry door is of unpainted mahogany with a central cast-metal grill and door "peep-hole" to preview visitors. An original cast-metal electric wall sconce, of matching design to the door grille, is centered upon the interior west-facing wall of the entry porch. A non-historic aluminum screen door, in a deep brown enameled metal, is present at the main entrance.

A rear entry door is located on the east-facing elevation, opening off the kitchen/basement stairwell area. A small cantilevered canopy with open sides shields this door from the weather. The rear door is wood with multiple lights and the original wooden screen door remains.

Attached to the north corner of the main volume is a small single car garage of matching exterior construction with shingle siding and white painted trim. This structure, in part cantilevered from the main building, is original to the property despite its rather odd integration with the design. The flat roof, presumably rebuilt based upon the appearance of the open rafters and decking, is an undated replacement of the original.

Except as noted, there are no known alterations to the exterior of the Clark-McConnell House. During the late 1980s the stucco and half-timbering, as well as the clapboard gable ends, was painted in non-historic pattern, as depicted in attached photographs. Upon their resuming residence in the house in 1995, the McConnell family repainted the exterior based on historic design as a part of the renovation and upgrade described in more detail below.

### INTERIOR:

#### *Main Floor:*

The main floor of the Clark-McConnell House is accessed via the arched-opening of the stucco front porch and mahogany door described above. One enters into the living room, a

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rectangular space approximately 14' wide and 19' long. Wall finishes are of a heavy textured plaster over lath, all dating from the original construction. The flooring is of 3" tongue and groove maple, thoroughly refinished in 1995. Baseboards are of 4" high painted shoe with a simple edge detail. A natural finish mahogany picture molding runs the entire perimeter. Door and window trim is integral to the plaster walls, consisting of a rounded edge with interior mitered corners, in effect framing the opening with a round cornered surround. Sills are natural mahogany and, like all door and window trim, is assumed to be original.<sup>3</sup> The design of the rounded door surround creates an interesting installation challenge for door hinges, a problem surmounted with the use of two elongated cabinet hinges, set in pairs (four per door) that project from the stop over the curved surface area to the mortise of the door itself. (*Please see photograph #13*)

A floor-level hearth, of deep umber glazed ceramic tile approximately 5" square, is centered on the western wall of the Living Room and is presumed to be original. A modern brass fireplace screen encloses the original firebox. Wood lattice vent covers for the heating system survive, inset into the maple flooring. All lighting fixtures, door and window hardware and similar features appear original.

An angled wall with an arched opening is at the SE corner of the Living Room and opens onto the Dining Room. Here all interior finishes are as described above, with maple flooring, heavy plaster coated walls, mahogany sills and picture mold and rounded door and window surrounds. A small recessed telephone niche with arched top, is set into the wall cavity of the northern dining room wall, just west of the kitchen entry. A natural single-recessed-panel mahogany door with original floor-mounted "butler" swing hardware opens onto the kitchen.

On the north wall of the Living Room, an original single-recessed panel mahogany door opens onto the hallway. A built-in linen closet is located at the west, next to the opening to Bedroom #2. A second open niche is located next to the bathroom with two lower doors that open onto a galvanized laundry chute to the basement, all original. The bathroom, while modernized, retains the massive porcelain tub from the original construction. Bedroom #1 is accessed via an angled doorway entrance at the east end of the hall. All these spaces retain a high degree of integrity in design, with original door and window trim, hardware and wall finishes generally surviving.<sup>4</sup> In these private spaces,

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<sup>3</sup> Much of the trim was painted sometime prior to 1995 and has been stripped as a part of the restoration undertaken by the McConnells.

<sup>4</sup> The original plaster walls of the bathroom are wallpapered but the curved door surrounds survive.



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doors and trim are painted rather than the natural finish found in the living areas. To the south of Bedroom #1 a pair of multi-light glass and wood bi-fold doors provide access to the upper floor. Originally a solid wood door was at this location but following the completion of the upper floor as detailed below, these compatible doors were installed to permit better access and traffic flow through this complex interior intersection. The 36" wide stairway to the Upper Floor is of simple painted riser with a small bull-nose on the painted Fir treads. Walls in the stairwell are original lath and plaster and a simple, non-historic, handrail is present.

The kitchen area retains the original single-panel kitchen cabinets and natural wood drain boards throughout. Walls and ceilings are lath and plaster with non-original vinyl flooring in a black and white pattern. A small sun-room, currently used as an office, is located to the south of the kitchen, at the SE corner of the building. Wall finishes here are substantially covered by full-wall mirrors but otherwise appear to be consistent with the remainder of the structure.

Twin angled steps off the NE corner of the kitchen lead both to the rear entry door and the flight of stairs that descends toward the basement. A small built-in broom closet is nested into the odd angled space created between the stairs and the rear door,.

### ***Basement:***

Accessed from the kitchen and rear entry, the basement of the Clark-McConnell House is approximately 18' x 21' in area, all with a concrete slab floor. The poured perimeter foundation walls (with exposed formboard marks) form the walls and there are wood-sash transom windows along the northern wall providing daylight. Exposed floor joists form the ceiling and there are no finishes, trim, or other decorative features. The functional basement houses the mechanical systems; a modern gas-fired heater and electric water heater, as well as a clothes washer and dryer and utility sink. Crawl spaces, with dirt floors, are open surrounding the usable basement area.

### ***Upper Floor:***

As was common in many southern Oregon houses built during the 1920s and 1930s, the upper floor of the Clark-McConnell House was framed during the original construction but left unfinished, presumably as a cost savings measure. Throughout the entire historic period this space apparently provided unheated storage and little else. Open stud walls

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formed the rooms as they exist now and some minimal wiring provided limited light and power, consistent with the unfinished use.

In 1995 with the return of the McConnell family to the house, this area was at long last finished and converted to occupied space, adding a third bedroom and the open central area to the house's usable footage. Interior finish remains simple, with the rough diagonal sub-floor still exposed and covered with area rugs. Walls were insulated and clad with wall board, finished in a heavy stucco coat that is compatible with the lath and plaster walls of the main floor. At the top of the stairs, the simple balustrade installed in 1995 is built of standard 2" x 4" posts with 1" x 3" railings, all left unpainted. Lighting and other features, while all modern, are generally compatible.

### GROUNDS AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES:

Overlooking the Rogue River and Riverside Park, the Clark-McConnell House by design is oriented toward the south, away from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. A early-appearing concrete walkway leads from the gravel parking area and garage on the north, follows the perimeter of the west elevation of the house and then connects with a slightly larger concrete walk of matching design that runs from SE 8<sup>th</sup> directly to the front entry porch. Another small concrete walk runs from the entry along the south elevation to the rear. All walkways appear to original to the site.

The original picket fence, extant to the late-1980s according to available photographs, had deteriorated by 1990 and removed. (*Please see Photograph #4*) In 1995 the arbor at the head of the main walkway was built and the present fence, designed to replicate the original, was installed along the SE 8<sup>th</sup> frontage. Remaining fencing, along the north property line and along the gravel parking area, is of a modern wooden rail type.

Large deciduous and evergreen trees are scattered throughout the grounds, providing shade and substantial privacy to the site. Perimeter plantings, lawn areas, and beds are all present on the maturely landscaped site.

### SUMMARY:

The Clark-McConnell House retains a very high degree of integrity in virtually all aspects of its interior and exterior design, use of materials, setting, and general character. Historic or early-appearing lighting, interior trim, surfaces, hardware, and other materials all remain essentially as originally constructed. Identified alterations from the historic period, while

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substantially limited, are without exception in keeping with the original character of the English Cottage style.

Over 60 years after its construction, the Clark-McConnell House remains an unaltered and significant example of the English Cottage Style as utilized in Grants Pass during the mid-1930s. The house effectively and accurately relates the associations which make it significant for listing under Criterion "C" of the evaluation criteria of the National Register of Historic Places.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Culture; 20th Century Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1936  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Josephine County Courthouse  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Completed by July 1936, the Clark-McConnell House is significant under Criterion "C" as an excellent example of a wood-shingled "English Cottage" Style residence in Grants Pass, Oregon. The wood-framed one and one-half story steeply pitched gable volume retains high integrity in its setting along the Rogue River, its use of materials, and workmanship. The Clark-McConnell House effectively and admirably relates both its original design and the associations which make it significant.

### GRANTS PASS CONTEXT & DEVELOPMENT:

The City of Grants Pass was founded in 1883 as the result of the extension of the Oregon and California Railroad line south from Roseburg. This event, which created the first direct rail link between southern Oregon and the more populous Willamette Valley, was a stimulus for massive growth throughout Jackson and Josephine counties. The city of Grants Pass, platted on speculation by Portland businessman and investor Jonathan Bourne, was designated a depot site and served as the line's terminus from December 1883 until the extension of the line to Ashland in April 1884. Grants Pass, initially located at the extreme edge of Jackson County, became the Josephine County seat following an 1885 act of the Oregon legislature that realigned boundaries to permit Josephine County its own railhead and in 1887 became its first and only incorporated city.<sup>1</sup>

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the primary focus of Grants Pass was centered upon the railroad tracks and depot area that formed the center of the Original Town Plat near the intersection of G and Sixth streets.<sup>2</sup> Residential development was largely limited to those areas surrounding the commercial core, in close proximity to jobs and places of business. The original farmland of the southern part of the town gradually filled with simple working class housing while the merchant and professional classes built larger homes at the north of the townsite, particularly along A, Lawnridge and Washington streets, in the NW quadrant of the community.

After 1910, as the city's roads were first paved and automobile transportation became more affordable and reliable, merchants and professionals became to build homes further outside the downtown core, extending the residential district further south and providing an opportunity for residential development along Rogue River and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> Grants Pass remained the only incorporated city in Josephine County until 1948 when Cave Junction incorporated.

<sup>2</sup> Much of the original commercial district of Grants Pass' railroad-era is included in the G Street Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in October 1993.

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This trend of expanding residential areas outside the downtown grew during the 1920s, aided by the maturing of the Pacific and Redwood highways as major avenues for tourism and trade. These two highways entering Oregon from California meet just southwest of the Clark-McConnell site and with the completion of the Caveman Bridge in 1931, replacing an earlier and smaller span,<sup>3</sup> access from SE Grants Pass was vastly improved and residential development in the area logically took on newfound desirability.

### CONSTRUCTION & SPECIFIC HISTORY

Following a general lull in building permits during the early 1930s that resulted from the economic uncertainty of the Great Depression, construction in the City of Grants Pass slowly rose after 1934 and by the Spring of 1936 the local *Grants Pass Courier* regularly reported the value of permits issued by the city. Much of this construction was focused in the SE portion of the city, according to available local reports of building activity.<sup>4</sup> While the specific construction date of the Clark-McConnell House is undetermined, it is almost assuredly among the dwellings constructed during a small "building boom" that occurred during Spring 1936. In March of that month the Federal Housing Administration held a "Mortgage Clinic" in Grants Pass to assist potential home builders and the first quarter of 1936 saw building permits rise dramatically.

Building permits issued during the uncompleted first quarter of 1936 in the city of Grants Pass are 409 percent greater than the total of the first three months of last year. Local builders see this as a definite revival in construction during 1936 and 1937. (*Grants Pass Bulletin*, 27-March-1936, 1:4)

In anticipation of the growing interest in SE Grants Pass, E. L. Larm, a single farmer who owned a large parcel between M Street and the Rogue River, sold a portion of the property to Lloyd Morrison and several others in January 1936. (JoCty Deed 80:270) Morrison quickly divided the parcel, which lined the River, into smaller residential lots and established a 16 foot wide easement [now Rogue View Lane] along the north property line

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<sup>3</sup> The Rogue River or "Caveman" Bridge was actually the fourth bridge at this general location. See Smith et al, *Historic Highway Bridges of Oregon*, 1989:105.

<sup>4</sup> Period accounts from March and April 1936 document civic work upgrading facilities at Riverside Park along with new homes on M Street as well as various additions and repair work in the SE portion of the city.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation

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for access.<sup>5</sup> A well-known developer and builder, Lloyd Morrison remained a long-time Josephine County resident and was the original operator of Morrison's Lodge on the Lower Rogue, still a popular recreation and dining establishment.

### CLARK: 1936-1941

Morrison soon sold the subject property to M[arvin] D. and Anna M. Clark, husband and wife, who purchased the property on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 1936 and recorded the deed on 13-April. (JoCty Deed 80:592-3) The Clark s purchased the choice westernmost portion Morrison's project, with frontages on both the River and SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. This parcel was subject to the Rogue View Lane easement as well as a reserved area of land "30 feet in width by 96 feet in length" at the southwest corner of the tract that had been sold to the "Oregon and California Railroad Company" in February 1918 for unspecified purposes.<sup>6</sup>

Marvin D. Clark (known as "M. D") had retired as the President of the Waldo Bank, in Waldo, Arkansas about 1928. M. D. and his wife, Anna, moved to southern California where their son, Marvin W. Clark (known as Marvin), was completing his education at Whittier College. First moving to McMinnville, the younger Clark soon settled in Grants Pass and was joined by his parents sometime prior to 1930. At that time M. D. Clark, having lost much of his retirement funds in the drop in the stock market, established the Clark Insurance Agency. Unfortunately, just a short time after building the subject structure "M. D. suffered a serious heart condition in 1936 and his son, Marvin W. Clark, entered the business." (Murphy, 1988:277) Still later, Marvin's two sons assumed management of the company and today, 68 years after its founding, Clark Insurance is under the direction of the family's fourth generation.

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<sup>5</sup> The period deeds all refer to a 16'-0" easement while current Assessors Plats show Rogue View Lane as having a width of 17'-5". The date of this expansion was not documented or researched.

<sup>6</sup> See JoCtyDeed 48:349. The O & C RR Co. was the original developer of Oregon's main north-south line, and was absorbed into the Southern Pacific Railroad by the late 1880s. Given the 1918 transaction date, this parcel was more likely connected with the ill-fated "California and Oregon Coast Railroad," an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Grants Pass-funded attempt to develop a spur line to the mining and agricultural lands west of the city. Beginning just before WWI from the SP Depot on G Street, the C & O RR laid just 15-miles of track, west to Waters Creek, but remained in business into the 1950s. (See Sutton, 1967:96 Thompson, 13-May-1991.) No Quit Claim deed on this portion of the Clark-McConnell lot was located however the railroad company is assumed to be defunct. The Josephine County Assessors office shows no separate tax payments on 30x96 parcel and its exact ownership, or whether it has in fact reverted to inclusion in Tax Lot 4700, remains unclear.

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It is unclear where the M. D. Clark resided upon first relocating to Grants Pass but having purchased the subject property from Morrison in March 1936, construction of the new family home facing the Rogue River apparently began almost immediately. Clark had previously overseen the construction of a number of homes and it is considered likely that the plans for his new Grants Pass residence came from California. There is at least some indication that that contractor was a Mr. LeMoss, who lived nearby but this can not be documented conclusively. "It [the house] was rather unusual for Grants Pass at the time, since not many homes had any stucco on them."<sup>7</sup> As documented in attached Photograph 2, originally published on the front page of the *Grants Pass Courier* on 27-July-1936, the Clark-McConnell House was substantially completed by the Summer.

As a result of his heart condition, M. D. and Anna Clark decided to move to the Fruitdale District, just SE of Grants Pass, so as to be closer to their son Marvin and his family just a few years after completing the house. The Clarks sold the subject dwelling to D. L. and Ferne Gillette, husband and wife, in June 1941. (JoCtyDeed 107:517) No information regarding the Gillette's was discovered as a part of this research and in February 1945, only four years after purchase, they in turn sold the house and property to Sam A. and Helen L. McConnell. (JoCtyDeed 119:371)

### **McCONNELL: 1945-**

Both Sam and Helen McConnell were of families with long roots in the southern Oregon area. Helen McConnell was descended from early settlers in the Wilderville area of Josephine county and had first moved to Grants Pass in 1916 via covered wagon with her parents Roy and Lena Higgins. Sam McConnell was raised in Roseburg, where his father, who had been born in Jacksonville in 1885, worked as a conductor for the Southern Pacific Railroad. In 1940, married and living in Grants Pass, the McConnells purchased the "Palace Café," a small diner located at 605 SE Sixth Street, right on the Pacific Highway and opposite the imposing Del Rogue Hotel.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Op cit. Jim Clark reports that he recalls LeMoss owned property to the west of the Clark-McConnell House and was responsible for its construction but this has not been confirmed. There is no indication of any local architect or designer involvement and Jim Clark also reports that his grandfather had built a number of homes in the Arkansas and California areas, often using planbook sources.

<sup>8</sup> The Clark Insurance agency was located on the first floor of the Del Rogue. First constructed in 1911 as the "Stewart Hotel" and later renamed "The Oxford," in 1927 the building was renamed the Del Rogue and underwent a 175K renovation. The building was torn down in 1965. (Booth, 1984:73-5)



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As one of the few local establishments to be open 24-hours a day, the Palace Café became a local institution under the McConnell's control. "The food was top-notch and tasty...and the atmosphere was casual. It was an excellent place to eat, meet friends, and was an easy stop for tourists...Giant billboards advertised the Café as the only air conditioned restaurant in town." In these days before easy two-way radios and as a popular stop for the local constabulary, a wire was stretched across Sixth Street between the Palace Café and the Del Rogue Hotel "...with a bare red light bulb hanging down the center...when the light was on, it was the signal for the City Police to call in to headquarters." (McConnell, 2-June-1997) As owners of a popular business, the McConnells were well known in Grants Pass and Sam would serve a term on the Grants Pass City Council.

By the late 1940s the Palace Café had been closed and the Clark-McConnell House was owned and occupied by Helen McConnell following her divorce. Helen remained in the house through the early 1950s but eventually moved elsewhere and rented the larger home. Eventually remarrying and relocating to California, Helen continued her ownership of the subject property. From the late 1950s through the mid-1990s, the house was rented or leased to a number of individuals, as documented by available city directories. During this period the house received little attention and gradually deteriorated.<sup>9</sup>

In 1995, Sam and Helen McConnell's daughter Arden returned to the Grants Pass home where she was raised and began a thorough renovation of the home, upgrading the electrical and other systems. As documented in the previous Part 7, both the interior and exterior of the Clark-McConnell House have been substantially returned to their original appearance.

### DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

#### **THE "ENGLISH COTTAGE" STYLE**

The Clark-McConnell House is a simple local expression of the "English Cottage" style, a popular form for residential construction during most of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Occasionally referred to as Tudor, "...this picturesque [style] featured asymmetrical massing of steeply pitched roofs, stucco walls with clean edges, unusual window patterns, tall chimneys, and English detailing — all calculated to produce a charming, moderately

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<sup>9</sup> Jim Clark (M. D. Clark's grandson) served as the insurance agent for the McConnell family during this period. He reports that by 1995 the house was in "pretty bad shape."

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rustic design.” (Gottfreid & Jennings, 1988:193) Architectural historians remain somewhat divided on the derivation of the English Cottage style, with many seeing it as a nostalgia-based revival the deserves little serious notice. Yet others, most notably Alan Gowans, see the form as being well within the move toward the “modern” that swept high-style architecture in the 1920s and 1930s.

Superficially, American architecture during the 1920s generally seems considerably more “modern” than its predecessors.... To be sure, period houses are usually recognizable as “Tudor” or “Spanish” or (most often) “colonial,” and they preserve a general “picturesqueness of irregular outline. But they have much less detail and ornament: they suggest historic style in massing, by a few obviously borrowed details, in general proportion rather than by exact imitation. (Gowans, 1964:422)

Even more forcibly, Clifford Edward Clark, in *The American Family Home*, writes “...English Tudor homes had a basic simplicity of form...that made them appear ‘American’ even though they paralleled European designs...Tudor styles, with their cleanness of line and simplicity of shape, were as a dramatic rejection of the ornate Victorian forms as were the Prairie School homes or the suburban bungalows.” (Clark, 1986:149)

In larger urban areas and their suburban surroundings, the English Cottage style was often employed for more elaborately constructed brick residences and it is often these impressive, architect-designed, structures that are used as published examples of the style. Still, by the early 1930s simple rural versions of the English Cottage and its relative, the Norman Farmhouse, had become popular alternatives to the ubiquitous Bungalow and its various offshoots in less populous regions such as Grants Pass and southern Oregon. Plan companies, shifting focus from traditional bungalow-inspired designs, soon made plans for the various “Revival Styles,” including the English Cottage, available in large quantities. Advertisements for such plans were commonplace in period publications such as *House Beautiful* and *Sunset*, while pre-fabricated English Cottage style dwellings were available in “kit” form from firms such as Sears, Roebuck and Company.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Stevenson and Jandl, “Houses By Mail (Washington, D.C., The Preservation Press, 1986). In the 1920s as planbook publishers moved away from the traditional “Bungalow” style and its woody Arts and Crafts heritage towards brick and stucco Colonial and English Cottage stylistic terms became unfortunately and meaninglessly blended into descriptions such as “Spanish Mission” or English Cottage Bungalow.” See, for example, Design No. 11327 of the Blue Ribbon Home Company, described as “...an unusual and distinctive bungalow that has delightfully combined the quaint English and Spanish mission styles of architecture.” (Blue Ribbon Homes, c1920, pg. 13). By the 1930s national planbook

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As with the other "Revival" styles, the English Cottage was seen as a fashionable and "modern" choice for prosperous business-owners and professionals. Within the framework of the comparatively limited building of the Great Depression years, many such dwellings were constructed throughout the West.

A striking structure, [an English Cottage house] invited attention and implied that the occupants enjoyed a cultivated but pastoral life. (Gottfreid & Jennings, 1988:193)

Typical elements associated with the English Cottage style found on the Clark-McConnell House include the exterior shingle cladding with the change in materials (accented by the present, restored, paint scheme) at the gable ends, the multi-light wood framed windows and the curved opening at the stucco entry porch. Mock "half-timbering" and the large, brick chimney that visually balances the roof surfaces, are also typical of the style. Gottfried and Jennings claim that the single major feature of the English Cottage is its "...huge roof with contrasting roof lines of short and long steeply pitched gables, often arranged to intersect at varied ridges.." that visually dominates the exterior. (Gottfreid & Jennings, 1984:193)

### IDENTIFIED GRANTS PASS EXAMPLES:

Achieving widespread popularity during a period of limited building activity in the Grants Pass region and generally associated with masonry and stucco exterior treatments in an area with a plentiful and inexpensive supply of wooden siding, the English Cottage style was not a major influence in Josephine County during the historic period. The existing intensive survey of historic and cultural resources in Grants Pass is limited to the core downtown commercial core area and contains few 20<sup>th</sup> century residential resources, none of which exhibit the characteristics of the English Cottage Style. Nor does the exhaustive survey of the unincorporated areas of Josephine County identify any English Cottage residences.<sup>11</sup>

Only three examples of the English Cottage Style in Grants Pass have been identified. These include a modest asbestos shingle-clad structure at 617 SE M Street and a small

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providers published house plans in the English Cottage style for distribution by local lumber yards. In Oregon, "Copeland Homes," available statewide from the Copeland Lumber Company, offered a wide variety of English Cottage house plans "...in the Interest of More and Better Homes."

<sup>11</sup> See Kay Atwood, *Josephine County Historical Resources Inventory*, 1983-84 and Kramer & Chappel, *Historic Resources Survey and Inventory of the [Grants Pass, OR] Central Business District*, 1992.

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stucco-clad residence located at 244 NW C Street, both identified via windshield survey only. The most elaborate example of the style in stucco is the "Chriswood Inn," located at 220 NW A Street, on the NE corner of the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> and A, included in the City's "Goal 5 Inventory" as a locally designated resource on its historic merit. No specific historical information regarding this structure was included in that document nor has any been identified in the course of this nomination. The "Chriswood Inn" is a fairly high-style example of the English Cottage in the stucco medium and, located as it is on A Street, nearer to the city core, may pre-date the construction of the Clark-McConnell House.

### SUMMARY:

As the best identified example of the wood shingle English Cottage Style in the Grants Pass vicinity, the 1936 Clark-McConnell House is exemplary of that style. Accurately reflecting its original design and appearance and long associated with two prominent families in the Grants Pass area, the Clark-McConnell House retains very high integrity in its use of materials, its workmanship and setting on the banks of the Rogue River. The Clark-McConnell House effectively convey the associations which make it significant under Criterion "C" for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

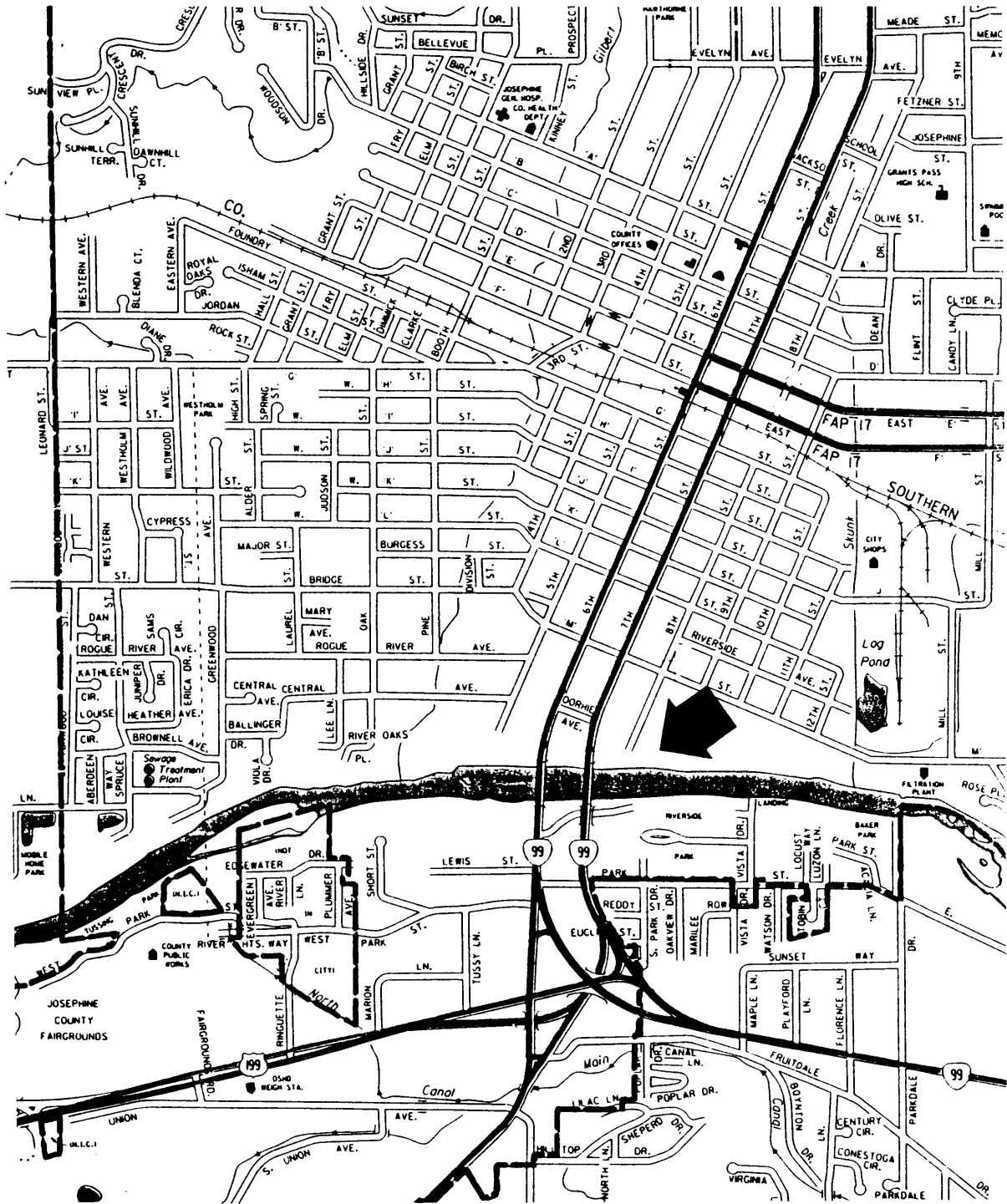
The nominated property includes all of that land encompassing a roughly parallelogram-shaped parcel that runs for a total of approximately 240' along the eastern side of S E 8<sup>th</sup> Street in the City of Grants Pass, Oregon, approximately 120' feet in width and designated as tax lots 4600 and 4700 on Josephine County Assessors Plat 36-5-19-1-1, encompassing a total of approximately .66 acres. This nominated property *includes* both the 17.6' wide easement that forms the western entrance of "Rogue View Lane" along the northern boundary of Tax Lot 4600 *and* the 30' x 96' area at the SW corner of Tax Lot 4700, accounting for the variation in the acreage size with the totals shown on the attached assessor's plat.<sup>1</sup>

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated property includes all of the lands historically associated with the Clark-McConnell House as purchased by the Clarks from Lloyd Morrison in March 1936, prior to the construction of the residence. The inclusion of the Rogue View Lane easement and the SW corner reserve reflect the taxable area of tax lots 4600 and 4700 as defined by the Josephine County Assessors office for the more than 50 years.

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Footnote 6 in Section 8 of this nomination for discussion on the history of the SW corner portion of the property. According to Les Scott, cartographer in the Josephine County Assessors Office, while both the easement and the SE corner parcel are included in the legal description of the property for county purposes and have been legally associated with the Clark-McConnell House for more than 50 years, neither is used in the area calculation for taxation purposes and thus is not reflected in the acreage shown on plat 36-5-19-1-1. (Les Scott, personal communication with the Author, 9-March-1998)



**Clark-McConnell House**

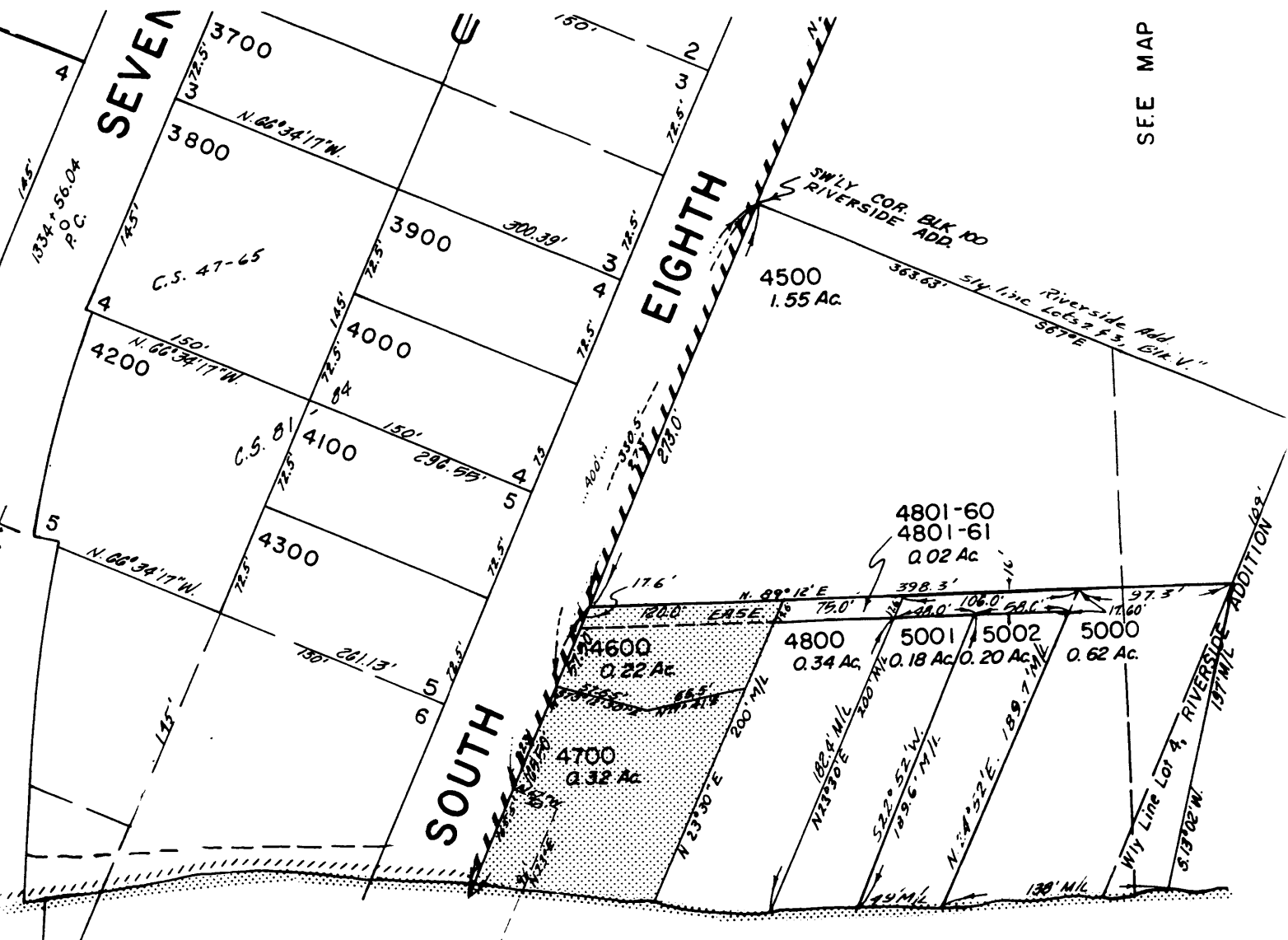
961 S E 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Grants Pass

**VICINITY MAP**

*(annotated Oregon Department of Transportation Map)*



SEE MAP



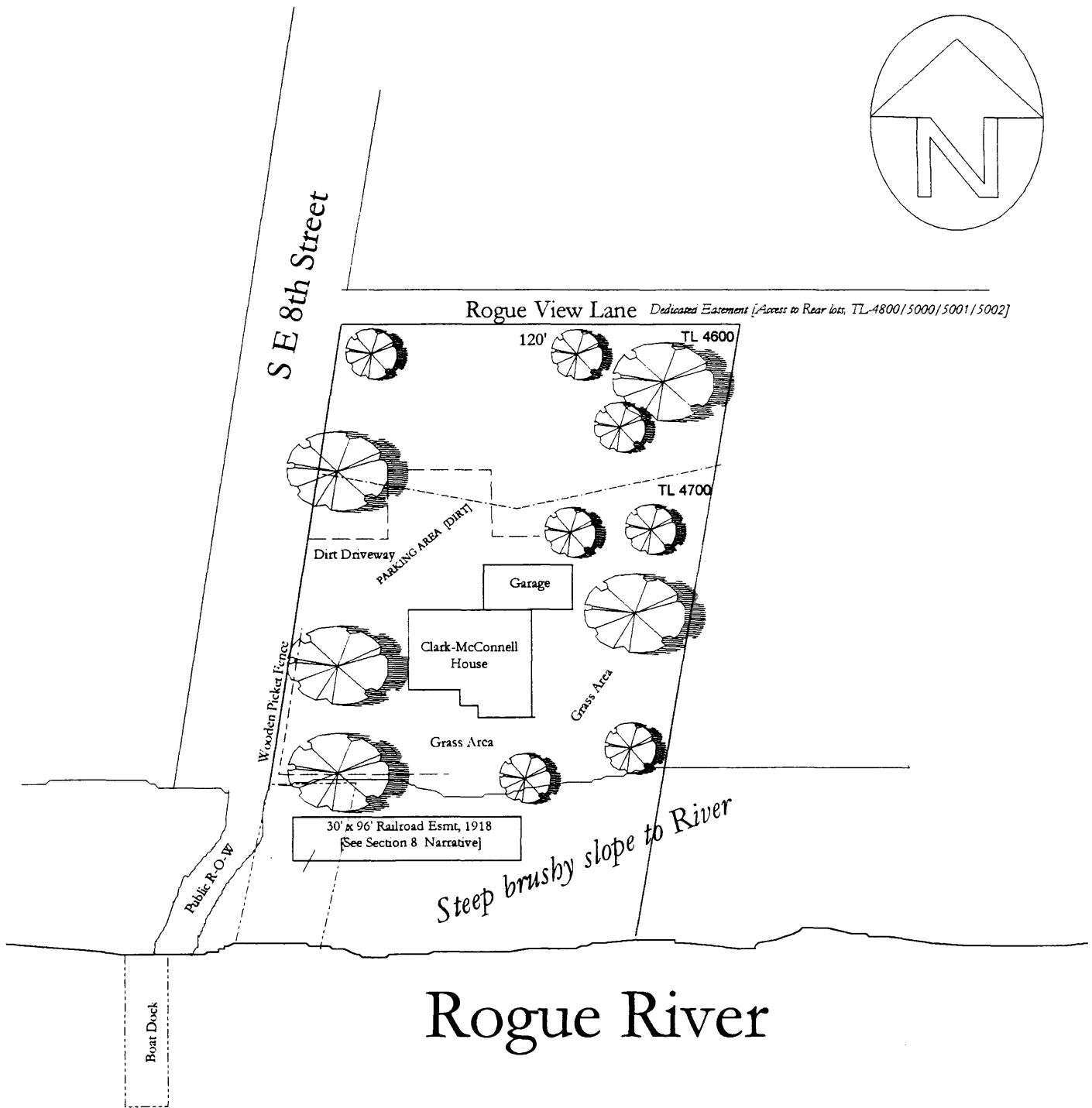
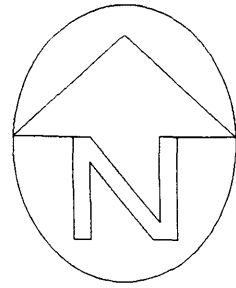
RIVER

This map was prepared for assessment purpose only.

**Clark-McConnell House**  
 961 S E 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Grants Pass

**ASSESSORS PLAT**

(Josephine Cty Assessors Plat 36-5-19-11, TL 4600 & 4700)

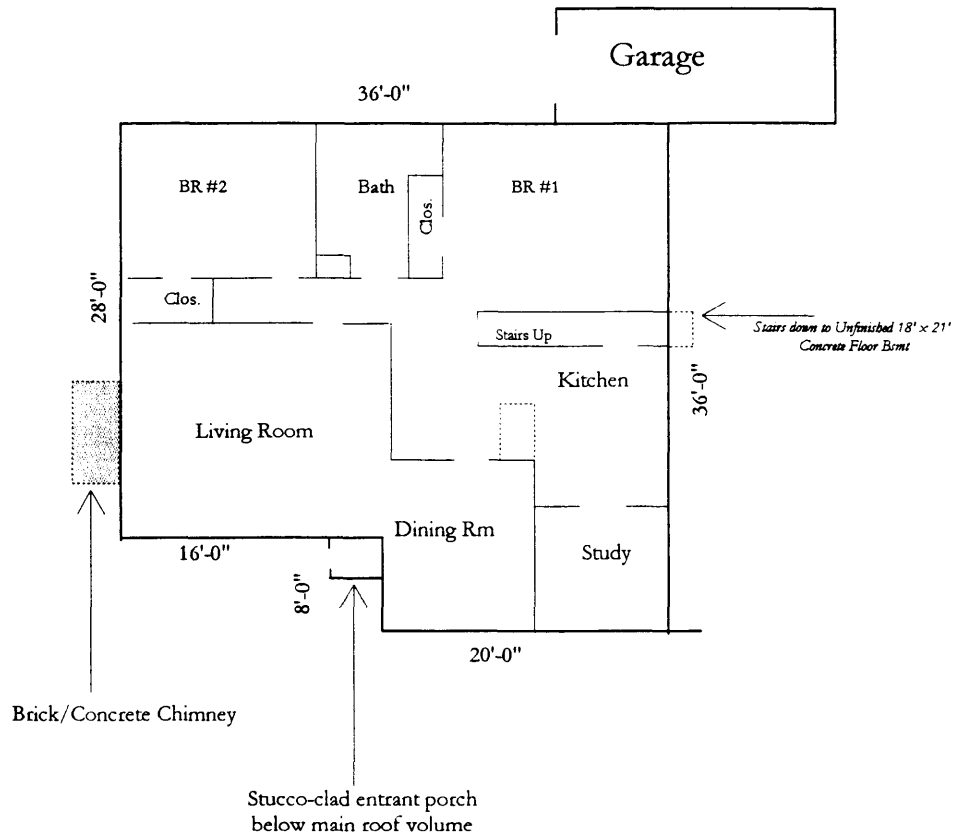


# Rogue River

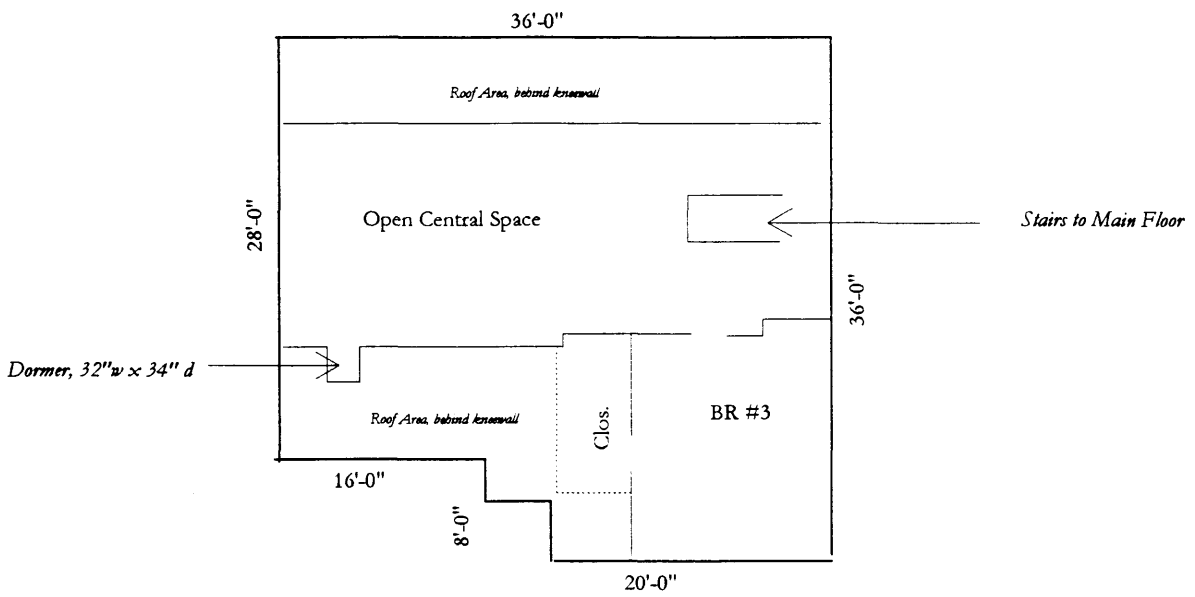
**Clark-McConnell House**  
961 S E 8th Street, Grants Pass, OR

**SITE PLAN**

*All Sizes & Dimensions are  
Approximate Only*



**Clark-McConnell House**  
 961 S E 8th Street, Grants Pass, OR  
**Main Floor Plan**  
*All Sizes & Dimensions are  
 Approximate Only*



**Clark-McConnell House**  
 961 S E 8th Street, Grants Pass, OR  
**Upper Floor Plan**  
*All Sizes & Dimensions are  
 Approximate Only*

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1. Historic View: Clark-McConnell House, during construction  
Looking: NE, from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Photographer: A. E. Voorhies (Publisher/Owner, *Grants Pass Courier*)  
Date of Photograph: circa June 1936  
Copy Negative: Collection of G. Kramer (Original from A. McConnell)
2. Historic View: Clark-McConnell House, south-facing elevation  
Looking: North, from Riverside Park  
Photographer: *Grants Pass Courier* photo  
Date of Photograph: 28-July-1936  
Negative: Courtesy of the *Grants Pass Courier*
3. Historic View: Clark-McConnell House, west elevation w/original fence  
Looking: East, from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Photographer: Josephine County Assessors Office  
Date of Photograph: late 1980s  
Copy Negative: Coll. of G. Kramer, (Orig. from Josephine County Assessor)
4. Historic View: Clark-McConnell House, west and south-facing elevations  
Looking: NE, from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Photographer: Josephine County Assessors Office  
Date of Photograph: 1990  
Copy Negative: Coll. of G. Kramer, (Orig. from Josephine County Assessor)
5. Current View: Clark-McConnell House, west and south-facing elevations  
Looking: NE, from west property line  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: August 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
6. Current View: Clark-McConnell House, north and west-facing elevations  
Looking: SE, from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: August 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer

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7. Current View: Clark-McConnell House, east-facing elevation  
Looking: North, from south lawn  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: August 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
8. Current View: Clark-McConnell House, north-facing elevation, parking area  
Looking: South, from Rogue View Lane  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: September 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer,
9. Current Detail: Clark-McConnell House, Entry  
Looking: North, from south lawn area  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: August 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer,
10. Current View: Clark-McConnell House, south-elevation, setting  
Looking: North, across Rogue River from Riverside Park  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: August 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
11. Current Interior: Clark-McConnell House, Living Room  
Looking: NW, from entry way  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: September 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
12. Current Interior: Clark-McConnell House, Dining Room  
Looking: SE, from entry way  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: September 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer

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13. Current Interior: Clark-McConnell House, Hallway  
Looking: East, from BR #2 toward BR #1 & Stairway to Upper Level  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: September 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
  
14. Current Interior: Clark-McConnell House, Kitchen  
Looking: SE  
Photographer: G. Kramer  
Date of Photograph: September 1997  
Negative: Collection of the Photographer