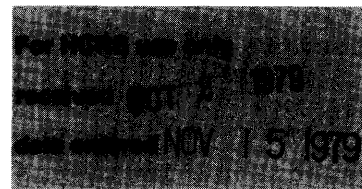


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Witzel, Robert, House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 6576 Joseph Street SE not for publication

city, town Salem me vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Oregon code 41 county Marion code 047

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 Terry and Mary Beth Thompson

street & number 6576 Joseph Street SE

city, town Salem vicinity of state Oregon 97301

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Salem state Oregon 97301

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 type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Robert Witzel House is a two-story frame farmhouse, rectangular in plan, with a double piazza extending across the north, or front elevation. Situated atop the first range of the Waldo Hills southeast of Salem, it commands a panoramic view of the Cascade Mountain Range to the north and west. The setting of the house remains predominantly rural, though there have been some changes in land use in recent years. There are well-designed modern houses with well-maintained gardens across Joseph Street to the north; fields to the west, and an old orchard behind the house to the south. On the east are unsightly abandoned mobile homes which have been condemned by Marion County and ordered to be cleared away. Until recently, the yard of the Witzel House contained such modern conceits as a wishing well and dog house. These have been removed by the present owners. Three stately broad leaf maple shade the house and yard.

Exterior walls of the house are of stud construction, and the interior is subdivided by board partitions. The east half of the ground story of the porch is enclosed for what is now kitchen space. The easternmost half of this enclosed section is original to the house, and was lighted by a double hung sash window. When the second half of the section was added, the original window opening was filled. The kitchen section is presently lighted by a horizontal aluminum sash window. Shiplap siding, 6 1/2 inches to the weather, was used on all exterior walls, including the single-story lean-to additions across the rear, or south face. Shiplap was removed and reused as adjustments were made over time. The second story wall, above the lean-to on the rear face, is presently covered with shingles. Among the simple features of exterior trim are a frieze board and corner boards. Tall, narrow window openings in the east and west end walls, and one in the westerly end of the ground story front wall, are fitted with double hung sash with one over one lights. The front entry, offset slightly from the center of the facade, originally had a four-panel door. Its transom light and framement are intact. The main volume of the house rests on its original cut stone foundation. The second story of the porch has a roof joined to the main volume under the eaves of the gable roof. Porch uprights are chamfered posts with Tuscan capitals, and the upper level is encompassed by a railing of turned balusters. The only opening in the north wall at the second story is a doorway from the central stairhall.

The interior plan is simple, having two rooms in the ground story of the main volume separated by a steep, narrow enclosed stairway rising from south to north. Upstairs, the two bedrooms are similarly separated by the stairway and hall. The hall railing is formed of turned post and balusters and shaped handrail. The rear porch, which was later enclosed, is presently subdivided by an enlargement of the west front room, or parlor. It has a bathroom in the center and a utility area on the east. The second, or southernmost lean-to, is unequally divided into a small space on the west end, and a long space making up the remainder. The present owners are contemplating the removal of the latter lean-to. The enclosed space in the east half of the front porch has been fitted out as a kitchen. Originally, the house had one stove chimney on the east side and a fireplace chimney on the west. The existing outside end chimney on the west end wall is a modern addition, as is the parlor fireplace it serves. The raised hearth of the latter extends over the foundation of the old chimney. Walls throughout have been resurfaced over the years. Sheetrock was used in the parlor and bedrooms; knotty pine on the east wall of the kitchen; and fiberboard tiles in the stairwell and upstairs hall as well as on all ceilings. Original trim may be uncovered when these surface materials are removed. Original hinges remain on all original doors, and examples of original hardware (doorknobs) remain also. The present owners have already taken up later flooring in the livingroom to reveal a tongue and groove fir floor in good condition. Prior owners built closets for upstairs bedrooms by encroaching upon the south end of the hall. Present owners plan to reopen the hallway as it was originally. Following is the statement of present owners with respect to their restoration plans.

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...all of the walls and ceilings have been covered with sheet rock, ceiling tile and/or pine panelling. Our plans are to remove these and wallpaper as would have been done originally. The high, close-grained fir floors will be carefully sanded and varnished. That portion of the second story stairway banister which was removed to accommodate closet additions will be replaced, and the closets removed. We will remove the paint and refinish all woodwork.

The working area of the kitchen which is now located in the enclosed front porch will be moved back into the original kitchen space. The interior chimney which was removed will be replaced, and a small parlor stove installed... Originally the fireplace in the living room, or parlor, stood out in the room with an interior chimney. These were replaced with a modern style of fireplace and an exterior chimney. We plan to remove the later additions and rebuild an interior chimney and fireplace in keeping with the period of the house.

The back porch was enclosed to include a utility room, bathroom, and to extend the living room, or parlor. We plan to enlarge the bathroom into the living room extension, thus bringing the living room back to its original configuration.

The unoriginal section of the front porch enclosure will be removed, and a railing added to match that of the upper porch. The exterior chimney will be removed, and all missing woodwork, i.e. window frames and porch posts, will be replaced in kind. The back rooms (outer lean-to) will be taken off, and the shingle siding on the south wall will be replaced with shiplap siding. A picket fence which originally ran the length of the front yard will be reconstructed, and brick walkways laid. We also are planning to reintroduce plantings that are appropriate to the period.¹

¹Terry Thompson and Mary Beth Thompson to David W. Powers, III, Staff Manager, State Historic Preservation Office, Salem, Oregon, March 26, 1979.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 c.1875

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The two-story frame house built in the rolling Waldo Hills southeast of Salem for Robert Witzel and his bride about 1875 is of exceptional interest because it demonstrates the longevity of the double piazza form in Oregon domestic architecture. Few other examples of the once-common type remain today, and these rare survivals range from the relocated and restored home of the Reverend Jason Lee (1841) in Salem to the Wolf Creek Tavern in Josephine County which is roughly contemporary with the Witzel House. The Witzel House represents the small scale and simply-finished end of the spectrum. Its proportions and plain detail are rooted in the Classic Revival. The double piazza is rooted in building traditions of the eastern United States dating from the 18th century. The house is significant to Marion County for its association with the family of Benjamin Witzel, overland pioneer of 1854 who was among the earliest settlers on the land southeast of Salem and who systematically expanded his holdings until neighboring farms were secured to each of his four sons, including Robert.

Agriculture

Robert Witzel's farm of 150 acres was acquired from his father by deed in 1877, but the younger Witzel was already paying taxes upon it by 1875. Robert married in December, 1875, and the house appears on a map in Edgar Williams' Illustrated Historical Atlas Map, published in 1878. The date of construction is based on the assumption that the house was made ready for Robert's bride.

The farm by 1880 was typical of those around it. There were forty acres of "woodland" and 110 cultivated acres: 57 planted to wheat, ten to oats, 3/4 to Indian corn, and 1/8 to potatoes. The whole was valued at \$4,500. Robert had four horses, eight cattle, six swine and 24 barnyard fowl. Farm produce sold, consumed or on hand was valued at \$1,230.

By 1910, when Witzel sold his farm, fruit tree farming was the rage on the hills near Salem. In 1914 the property was acquired by the Waldo Hills Orchard Company. There followed a series of sales and eventual subdivisions of the farm. On May 2, 1944, the present limited property lines were established by a survey for Usona Thiessen. No outbuildings survived.

Architecture

Situated on a county road which cuts across the land once farmed by Robert Witzel, the house is a two-story frame farmhouse with double piazza, a type which was frequently built in the Willamette Valley, and which is fast disappearing. There is no other example of the two-story porch in the Salem area except for the Jason Lee House of 1841. The stone foundation insures the solidity of the structure, and most of the fabric is intact, despite several alterations which occurred in recent years. A careful restoration is planned by its present owners. The rural character of the neighborhood is retained in the fields to the west and the orchard to the south, behind the house. The property is still outside the urban growth boundary of Salem, but there is a modern subdivision to the north, across Joseph Street.

Settlement

Originally, the 150 acres making up Robert Witzel's farm were part of the larger James and Barbara McCubbins Donation Land Claim, settled in 1853. The acreage was sold off to John Farrens in 1857 and acquired from Farrens's heir by Benjamin Witzel in 1871. The Witzels

9. Major Bibliographical References

Union Title Company and Salem Title Company records, Salem, Oregon.

US Census of Agriculture, 1880.

Marion County Tax Rolls, 1875-1879 (state archives)

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one (161.72x157.12')

Quadrangle name Salem East, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A

1	0	5	0	5	8	5	0	4	9	6	9	9	1	8	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 nominated property is located in SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 10, T8S, R2W, W.M., Marion County, Oregon. Tax Lot 57147. Beginning at the point of intersection of the center line of SE Joseph Street (formerly Gilbert Road) and the west section line of Section 10 of above-named township and range, thence south along said section line (see continuation sheet)

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

(see continuation sheet)

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David C. Duniway

organization

date February 28, 1979

street & number 365 John Street S.

telephone 503/581-2338

city or town Salem

state Oregon 97302

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

title SHPO Designee

date September 20, 1979

For HCRS use only

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

Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register

date 11-15-79

Attest: Kristin O'Connell

date 11/14/79

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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came to Oregon from Georgia by way of Missouri in 1854. The elder Witzel expanded his holdings, and by 1880 he had provided farms to each of his four sons, including Robert. The old Witzel School was named for this family. In 1943 Witzel School merged with the Aumsville School District.

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Steeves, Sarah Hunt, Book of Remembrance of Marion County, Oregon (1927), p. 290
(Benjamin Witzel)

Oregon Statesman Political Album for 1898 (portrait and biography of Robert Witzel)

Williams, Edgar and Company. Illustrated Historical Atlas Map of Marion and Linn
Counties, 1878. p. 37 (map including part of Turner precinct).

Genealogical Forum of Portland, Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims
Vol. I (Oregon City)#1851, p. 75.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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Verbal boundary description (cont).

approximately 30' to the true point of beginning, thence south along said section line 161.72', thence east in a line approximately perpendicular to said section line 157.12', thence north in a line parallel with said section line 158.74' to the south margin of Joseph Street, thence west along said south margin of Joseph Street 157.12' to the true point of beginning.