

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 instruction 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 an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classifications, 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 Lowell Grange

other names/site number Lowell School

2. Location

street & number 51 East 2nd Street not for publication

city or town Lowell vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Lane code 039 zip code 97452

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.

James Hamrick June 21, 2005
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
Action

- 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):

Jon Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of 8/10/05

Lowell Grange
Name of Property

Lane County, OR
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many 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	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>		Total

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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Education: School
Social: Meeting Hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Social: Meeting Hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Wood: plywood/particle board

roof: Asphalt
Other: Wood

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

See continuation sheets.

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Introduction

The Lowell Grange was built in 1914 as a schoolhouse in the rural community of Lowell, in Lane County, Oregon. The town is situated about 20 miles southeast of Eugene, near Dexter Reservoir, and hugs the base of Butte Disappointment, otherwise known as Lowell Butte. After a new school was built in 1940, this building assumed its second life as Lowell Grange #745 in 1941. The building is located at 51 East Second Street on the southwest corner of Block Two of the Plat of Lowell. The grange organization has served the community since World War I and the grange hall has served as the community center for social and political events since 1941.

General Description and Setting

According to historic photos, Lowell School was built in an entirely rural setting, surrounded by prairie-like grassland with no visible settlement in the surrounding landscape. Over time, development crept in and the building now stands in a primarily single family residential neighborhood with some commercial properties nearby. The town still retains its rural character and the feeling of a close-knit community. As previously mentioned, the town sits at the base of a butte and the terrain is generally hilly in nature. However, the school building sits on a flat, grassy, corner lot at the intersection of 2nd and Moss Streets. Two medium sized rose bushes are located to the west of the main entry. A small gravel lot in front of the building provides a parking area for visitors. It is situated in the middle of a large tax lot, in a rectangular area that is about 150 feet by 140 feet in size.

This one story, hipped gable roof building faces south and is generally rectangular in plan. It has a projecting front entryway and porch covered by a gable roof and small projections in the front and back for restrooms and the kitchen, respectively. The building exhibits elements of the craftsman style such as exposed rafters, broad eaves, brackets and squared porch supports. The structure is wood framed and rests on a concrete foundation. The basic dimensions of the building are 82x39 feet.

The building includes the original portion (which housed two classrooms), the 1946 east addition which expanded the east classroom and added a stage, and the kitchen addition (originally built in c.1941 and expanded in 1968 and again in c.1973).

Exterior Description

Front Porch

The low-pitched, hipped gable roof is covered with composition shingles, though the original wood shingles are still visible underneath. The concrete chimney pierces the roof behind the projecting front gable. A bell cupola originally sat directly on top of this gable but was removed by Grange members sometime in the late 1950s. The roof extends a broad, unenclosed eave overhang around the entire structure and the roof rafters are exposed. Two decorative knee braces are visible under the projecting front porch gable. The eaves of this gable are modestly decorated with white bargeboard and three squared posts support the gable. Under the peak of this porch eave is a rectangular, wooden, louvered vent for attic ventilation as well as a curved wood sign that reads, "Lowell Grange".

Of the three posts just mentioned, only the west post remains from the original construction. According to photographs found in the Grange collection, the middle porch post was installed by 1973 and the original east post had been replaced sometime before 1977. The original west post has a simple rectangular block detail at the top of each of its four sides.

The entry stairs originally spanned the entire width of the front porch and two glazed doors provided passage to the interior. The east entry door and accompanying window have been boarded up but the doorjamb and casing around the openings remains intact. The west entry and window are still in use though the glazed door has been replaced with a wood paneled door. The stairs now only stretch halfway across this entry area and lead to the single functional door. These alterations to the front porch took place somewhere between 1955 and 1973 according to photographs found in the Grange collection.

Originally there was a bell tower on the porch roof. It was removed sometime between 1953 and 1960.

Back Porch

The rear entryway is a five-paneled wood door that is intended to open onto an elevated wooden walkway, though this doorway is not currently in use. This walkway/porch structure also leads to a rear entry for the kitchen addition and is supported by large wooden piers. This rear porch and its supports are in deteriorating condition and currently pose a potential safety hazard.

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Siding

South face: The projecting entry space on the front, or south-facing façade, is the original entrance for the 1914 school building. It is sheathed in the original cedar lap siding with a 5" exposure, and attached with machine-headed, cut nails. This is the only area on the front of the building where this original material is visible. Grange members covered the majority of the building in T-1-11 siding in 1985.¹ However, all of the original sheathing material is extant underneath and seems to be in excellent condition, still retaining a substantial coat of brick-red paint.

East face: The east end of the grange is sheathed entirely in T-1-11 siding. This end is the 1946 addition, which houses the stage area of the building.

North face: Various sheathing materials on the back of the building illustrate the different periods of construction over the years. The addition is clad in circular-sawn, horizontal lapped boards and is attached with round-headed wire nails. The original lap with square nail attachment is also visible on the north face. The seam where the addition meets the original building is evident at the right edge of the rear entryway and continues down to the foundation. The kitchen addition is sheathed both in the same T-1-11 seen throughout the building as well as with vertical channel siding.

West face: The west end is covered entirely in T-1-11 siding. Also evident here is the seam in the foundation which distinguishes the original school mass from the kitchen addition.

Windows

South face: To the west of the entryway is a string of three, 1/1 wood double-hung windows which are original to the school building, though part of the stool and apron which extended to either side of the window has been removed. On the east side of the front facade are two 1/1, wood double-hung windows, which are located in the original portion of the building; there are no windows on this side of the 1946 addition.

East face: There are no windows on the east end.

North face: On the addition end of the north façade, two strings of three 1/1, wood, double-hung windows are located to the east of the rear entry door. To the west of this door, on the original school building, are a string of five 2/2 wood, double-hung windows, all of which serve to light the large meeting space/performance hall on the interior. Wooden shutters protect this string of five windows. Three different window types are used in the kitchen addition. To the left are two sliding windows, each with four lights and wood sash. In the middle are three casement windows; the middle pane is in a fixed wood sash. To the right is a sliding window with a metal sash.

West face: A metal sash window, identical to the one in the kitchen addition is located on the west end of the building, also in the kitchen addition. The building's original string of six 2/2 wood, double-hung windows is still intact and protected by wooden shutters.

Interior

The front entrance opens into a small entry hall, which includes a small closet, a narrow stairway providing access to the attic, and doorways to the banquet hall, meeting hall, and ladies restroom.

The bulk of the building's interior is comprised of two rooms: the banquet room at the west end and the meeting hall at the east end. The banquet room is located in the original school building's west classroom; the meeting hall occupies the original east

¹ Photos in the Grange records show Grange members installing T-1-11 over the original lap siding (1985 yearbook). All original material was in excellent condition in these photographs.

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classroom and the 1946 addition. The kitchen is to the north of the banquet room. The stage and backstage area are at the far east end of the addition. The restrooms, which were installed in 1952, are near the main entryway, on the south side of the building.

There is a small attic used for storage purposes (this is the area on the inside of the front gable) that can be reached by a flight of stairs in the main entry area. Additionally, a small cellar houses the water heater and oil furnace; this area is accessed by a stairway hidden beneath a trapdoor in the floor of the banquet room. From the cellar area, the crawlspace is visible and it contains, among other items, a number of white benches that may be the original schoolhouse seating. One of these benches also sits on the front porch of the Grange.

The walls of the banquet room are covered in birch wood paneling that has a square pattern, resembling a patchwork design. The windows original to the school building are all capped with decorative crown molding; this includes windows in the entryway and the banquet room. The original wood floor has been covered with linoleum tiles and the room is filled with long banquet tables. The ceiling is comprised of large tiles of varying materials from which non-historic, saucer-shaped light fixtures are suspended. The kitchen is accessed through an open passage at the north end of this room containing an opening for foot traffic and an open countertop area for serving food. The wood paneling has been decoratively scalloped over this entryway.

The kitchen walls are sheathed with the same square-patterned wood paneling with exception of the west end, which is covered in a vertical grooved wood paneling. The cabinet doors are made of birch wood and the orange Formica countertops and wall-covering match the color of the linoleum floor. The door at the east end accesses the rear porch and storage area; the doorway to the right of this leads to the meeting hall.

The meeting hall has an acoustical ceiling with various modern light fixtures suspended throughout the room, eight light fixtures in all. Again, the walls are covered in the same wood paneling as the banquet room and kitchen; a Douglas fir wood floor runs the length of the room. The entry to the men's restroom is located on the south side of this room.

At the east end of the meeting hall is the stage; the rounded proscenium projects just a couple feet beyond the red velvet curtains. To the south of the stage is a doorway that leads to the small backstage area. The backstage space is also accessed by two other doors from the stage, at the east and north sides of the building. The walls of the room are lined with benches and various tables and lecterns for Grange proceedings are scattered throughout the space. A piano sits in the corner next to the stage.

Three sets of doors separate the two main rooms. A wood burning stove and an adjacent closet for the storage of firewood is located at the southwest corner of the meeting hall near this set of doors. The stove is still used as the primary method of heating the space though there is an oil furnace in the basement.

Outbuildings

A small contributing, pump house built in 1941, exists to the east of the front entrance and still is used by the Grange today. It is sided with horizontal drop siding and the gable roof is sheathed in composition shingles. The building has walls that are about five inches thick, and may be filled with sawdust to insulate the equipment and protect it from freezing.² A small metal storage shed, which sits at the rear of the building, is deteriorating in condition and is currently filled with wood scraps; as a small structure, it is not counted in the resource count.

Developmental History

Aerial photographs have been instrumental in documenting the developmental history of the building and grounds. The 1939 photo shows the original school building with the east and west classrooms. To the southeast of the building is a large structure which may have been a playshed (this structure was demolished by 1941).³ A building north of the school is thought to have been the c.1880

² Secretary's Record Book for Lowell Grange #745. Entries for; October 9, 1941 and October 23, 1941. In October of 1941, the Executive Committee of the Grange decided to grant a ninety-nine year lease to School District #71 so they could have access to the Grange well for school purposes. The Grange shared half the expense of the pump house construction.

³ Playsheds were necessary structures on schoolhouse grounds in the rainy Oregon climate. They usually had one or more open sides and provided an outdoor play area for students in all weather conditions.

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pioneer school building, which possibly may have been used later as a small playshed or for storage⁴. A baseball diamond is visible in the rear school yard as are foot paths which lead to the separate outhouses for boys and girls on the eastern perimeter of the school grounds.⁵

A small kitchen addition was constructed by 1941 and seems to have been slightly extended to the east by 1968. Grange yearbooks indicate that the kitchen underwent further alteration in 1973-1974 when it was extended at both the east and west ends.

The Grange yearbooks also document alterations to the interior. The east end stage addition was built in 1946, and the lavatories were installed in 1952.⁶ A 1947 photo from the Oregon Grange Bulletin reveals that at that time, the walls were still coated with plaster and had not yet been covered with the wood paneling. It also shows that the current location of the wood stove is the same as it was in 1947 though the stove itself was likely replaced with a newer model in the 1970s. Additionally, the configuration of the three doorways which connect the two main rooms was the same in 1947 as today but the doors themselves have been replaced. Apparently some items that were no longer necessary to the building's function were sold and the money was used to support and fund Grange activities. In 1941, the original school bell was sold for \$12.50, as were the school's blackboards.⁷

The building has remained in its original location since its date of construction. Though alterations such as the removal of the bell tower and modifications of the front porch have been made, the building still retains the primary elements of its original craftsman-influenced design: the broad eaves, rectilinear porch, exposed rafters and hipped roof form. The eastern addition was made in the historic period. The restrooms, stage and kitchen were all necessary modifications to the Grange's function as a social center and, based on the period of significance, the majority of these alterations are historic.

The original horizontal lapped board siding is intact and in excellent condition underneath the 1985 application of the T-1-11 siding. The original siding on the building still exhibits the square nails it was attached with. The windows on the main body of the building are all original to their respective dates of construction. The straightforward workmanship is still evident in the exposed rafters, simple knee-brace ornamentation and lamb's tongue window detailing. Overall, this building retains a high degree of integrity.

Proposed Rehabilitation

The members of the local grange and community are interested in rehabilitating the building to preserve its place in the community. Although a specific rehabilitation plan has not been designed, it is likely that the following may occur: removal of the secondary siding and restoration of the original siding, which is intact beneath; reconstruction of the front porch to more closely match the original configuration; and some reconstruction on the back entrance to improve it for safety reasons.

⁴ This building was demolished sometime between 1960 and 1968 according to aerial photographs.

⁵ It seems that at least one of the outhouses was still standing in 1953; a visible foot path extends to the structure from the rear exit of the school. See aerial photographs.

⁶ The C.W.A. or Ladies of the Grange, compiled yearbooks containing newspaper clippings, photos and miscellaneous items which recorded Grange activities. Some of these offered information and fairly accurate dates of alterations and "improvements".

⁷ Secretary's Record Book for Lowell Grange #745. Entry for October 23, 1941.

Lowell Grange
Name of Property

Lane County, OR
County and State

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).

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

- 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.

Social History

Period of Significance
1940-1955

Significant Dates
1940, 1941, 1946, 1952

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 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

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

- Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36CFR67) 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: _____

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The Lowell Grange was built in 1914 as the Lowell School. It is being nominated under Criterion A for its association with the local grange movement, as well as a center for social and civic activities for community members. Its period of significance is from 1941 to 1955.

Early History of the Middle Fork Area

In the early 1850s, Lane County settlers who wanted to find a route that led directly through the Cascade Mountains into the Upper Willamette Valley established the "Free Emigrant Road". The creation of this passage also allowed the immigrants to avoid the tolls that they would have encountered at the northern and southern boundaries of the Oregon Trail.¹ The lands along the Upper Middle Fork of the Willamette River, where Lowell stands today, were opened to settlement by 1864 due to a land grant connected with the construction of the Oregon Central Military Road. This road was built in order to connect the Willamette Valley and Boise, Idaho for military purposes during the Indian wars of the 1860s. Most settlers sought farmland in the lower central valleys.²

In 1871, the Oregon and California (O&C) Railroad arrived in central Lane County and was instrumental in the transportation of freight and passengers between the larger towns and commercial centers in the North Valley, though not yet the Middle Fork area. By the 1880s, "commercial logging activities on the Middle Fork began...with the use of the river and its tributaries to drive logs to mills down the river."³ Though logging was beginning to make an impact on the Middle Fork and its residents, the area predominantly composed of settlers engaged in small-scale agricultural enterprises.

Up until about the end of the 19th century, the "dozen or so" settlers in the Middle Fork area were primarily conducting "subsistence" lifestyles. "Each [family or single settler] raised vegetables, fruit, hogs, livestock and chickens. They processed their own milk and butter and attempted to raise a staple crop for sale in the valley."⁴ They also hunted elk and deer for meat. By the late 1890s, a few of their number were growing hops.⁵

According to Heritage Research Associates, these life ways changed somewhat in the early 20th century with the expansion of logging into the foothills of the Western Cascades and the 1912 construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad ran along the north bank of the Middle Fork near Lowell and connected the upper Willamette Valley with the Klamath Basin. It provided an efficient method of transportation for the vast timber resources and as a result, several loggers had moved into the Middle fork area by 1905.⁶

Logging activities became a larger part of the area's economy and new families moved into the area for work opportunities with various logging camps. The region still continued to be highly dependant, however, on stock raising and agriculture as the primary basis for its economy. According to a survey of rural Lane County conducted in 1915-1916, almost 45% of all adult males were actively engaged in agriculture and 64% of the population was directly dependent on it.⁷

¹Thomas B. Forster and others, *The Cultural and Historic Landscapes of Lane County, Oregon: Summary Report of the 1986 Cultural and Historic Landscapes Resource Survey* (Eugene: December 1986), 43 (*paper*). This document was obtained through the City of Eugene Planning office and had two components, a sizable report as well as a brief summary paper. They will heretofore be referred to as *report* and *paper*.

² *Ibid.*, *report*, 135.

³ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁴ Heritage Research Associates. *Historic Use of Six Reservoir Areas in the Upper Willamette Valley, Lane County, Oregon*. Report prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District. (Eugene: 1982), 105.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁷ Fred C. Ayer and Herman N. Morse, *A Rural Survey of Lane County, Oregon* (Eugene: Extension Division, University of Oregon, 1916), 13. This survey area excluded Eugene.

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Lowell

In 1852, Amos Damon Hyland crossed the Plains to Oregon with his father and two brothers, arriving in Lane County in 1853. He began farming in the Junction City area and by 1874 had purchased a 2,450-acre ranch located at the juncture of the Oregon Central Military Wagon Road and the Springfield Road, along the Middle Fork of the Willamette River. By the 1880s, Hyland had developed a number of operations in addition to his cattle ranch including farming, hop raising, and the opening and operation of a general store, which was run by his son-in-law, Albert E. McFarland.⁸

A town was established in the summer of 1880 with the opening of the Cannon post office, which was sited on the Hyland Ranch. The post office was named Cannon after a local resident but the name was changed to Lowell in 1882, due to frequent confusion with Canyon City, Oregon. The new name was taken from Lowell, Maine, Hyland's previous residence, and thus the budding community came to be named as well.⁹

The original post office and the early Hyland store have been demolished. Lowell's oldest building, a residence known as the Hyland house to some (the Wetlau house to others), was built in 1902 by Ira Hyland, grandson of A.D. Hyland.¹⁰ This residence still stands at the corner of W. Main and S. Pioneer Street, across the street from the site of the Lowell Market, which was built by Earnest Hyland in 1907.¹¹ This Lowell landmark once housed the post office and an upstairs community dance hall.¹² It was destroyed by fire in 1996. Like the Grange, this building served as a focal point in the social lives of Lowell residents for eighty-nine years, and its loss was felt throughout the community.

Built as a School

As population and industry increased in the county, the quality and size of rural schools improved proportionally. According to the survey by Ayer and Morse, rural Lane County's greatest increase in population came between the years of 1900 and 1910. This was a 72.3% increase in population to 33, 783 people.¹³ In 1910, there were 2,826 farms operating in Lane County.¹⁴ The new Lowell School was built just four years after this population boom.

The Territorial Legislature created Oregon's public school system in 1849. Additionally, the state constitution assigned the legislature the responsibility of establishing such a system and provided for an elected state superintendent of instruction.¹⁵ Beginning in the second decade of the 20th century, increased attention was focused on the quality of school facilities and education in Oregon. The standardization of Oregon schools and the development of a standard school plan were implemented by the State Department of Education in 1914, though the plan had already been "thoroughly tested" in certain counties across the state.¹⁶

⁸ *Six Reservoir Areas*, 103-104.

⁹ Lewis Mc Arthur, *Oregon Geographic Names*, 6th Ed. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1992), 523.

¹⁰ *Eugene Register-Guard*, "History Up For Sale," 24 September 1981. George Bieloh who "fancied himself as a rancher" purchased the house and 3,000 acres in 1915. When Bieloh moved to Lowell he brought the Wetlaus with him. The husband and wife were the family's ranch hand and housekeeper and also had the distinction of being the only African Americans living in the area at that time. After Bieloh's death in 1930, the family let the Wetlaus stay in the house, which they did well into the 1960s.

¹¹ *The Lakeside News*, "Lore 'n' Legend," 13 January 1972.

¹² *Eugene Register-Guard*, "Suspicious Fire Guts Historic Store," 15 June 1996.

¹³ *Rural Survey, Lane County*, 20. This survey excludes the Eugene area.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁵ <http://bluebook.state.or.us/education/educationintro.htm>

¹⁶ The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. *The Rural School Exhibit of Oregon*. (Salem: State Printing Department, 1915), 3.

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A publication issued by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on the topic, illustrated and discussed the upgraded standards that all Oregon schools were to adhere to. The publication stated that the plan was:

Primarily an appeal to the pride of the people in each rural school district to bring their school up to a higher grade of efficiency. Through the appeal better school plants have been established, thousands of dollars have been spent in improving the school buildings, making them cheerful, wholesome and sanitary; the playgrounds have been enlarged and properly equipped.¹⁷

Some of the requirements for these new rural schools included a properly lighted schoolhouse, adequate equipment such as teacher's desks and chairs, blackboards, window shades, a good selection of books from the State list, proper heating and ventilation, school grounds that were clean and free from debris and sanitary drinking water and outhouse facilities.¹⁸ Photographic examples of the exteriors and interiors of these schools were provided in this publication and reflect the bungalow-influenced design with its hipped roof and rectilinear porch, which the Lowell School building exhibits.¹⁹

The same brochure goes on to discuss the community involvement that surrounded the creation of such schools. Community meetings were held in each district to "arouse public interest" in the standardization of the schools. These meetings acted to bring the community together and, as the pamphlet states, "in this way it has come about that in many of the rural districts throughout Oregon, the schoolhouse is used as a civic center."²⁰ Topics of exchange at these meetings ranged from discussion of political and social questions to sanitation in the school and home to what food items were necessary to pack in a sack lunch.²¹

A number of scholars writing on the subject of education in such rural schools at the time devoted much discussion to the schoolhouse and its important relationship to the community as a center for social activity. Mabel Carney writes that the "...country school of all rural institutions makes the best and most available center for upbuilding the rural community, and bears at present the greatest responsibility for socializing country life."²²

George Herbert Betts, Ph.D., had similar opinions, expressing the need for rural districts to have a "common neighborhood center for both young and old, which shall stand as an organizing, welding, vitalizing force" in uniting the community.²³ Betts states further that the country needs a center "where its people may assemble for recreation, entertainment and intellectual growth and development. And what is more natural and feasible than that the public school should be this center."²⁴

The Cannon School district was formed in 1877-78 and became the Lowell School District in 1882 with the renaming of the town. The first school in this district was built around 1879.²⁵ The Lowell School was built in 1914 on property owned by the Hyland

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

¹⁹ Ibid., 8. (Also: *Rural Survey, Lane County*, 88-90).

²⁰ Ibid., 9.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Mabel Carney, *Country Life and the Country School*. (Chicago: Row, Peterson and Company, 1912), V (preface).

²³ George Herbert Betts, Ph.D., *New Ideals in Rural Schools*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), 26.

²⁴ Ibid., 30.

²⁵ From research conducted by Maggie Osgood for Oregon Schools Calendar project, 2003.

²⁶ *Lakeside News*, 10 February, 1972.

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family, complete with outhouses and wooden walks which formed elevated walkways leading to the school's front steps. It eventually expanded into a two-room school, with "lots of space, windows and desks, enough to seat 66 pupils."²⁶ It is possible that this addition was built later in the decade according to new ideas about proper placement of windows in schools.²⁷

In addition to a new playshed, the playground was to have new, up-to-date equipment.²⁸ There were 23 students in the school's first year and a bus traveled within a 20-mile radius to transport the children to class. Aerial photographs indicate that the school had two outhouses on the property in addition to at least one playshed to the back of the schoolhouse. A larger structure appeared to the front of the school in the 1930s and may have been an additional playshed; this was demolished by the 1940s.

The first school district in the county was Pleasant Hill District #1. Subsequent districts formed where settlement occurred and schools were needed. "Separate school districts were established due to a lack of roads that limited travel."²⁹ At the time the Lowell School was built, there were a number other rural schools in the area. Five of these school districts consolidated with Lowell in 1940 when the school moved in to a new elementary school. These included the Unity, Landax, Fall Creek, Dexter and Eula School Districts.³⁰

Though very little information has been recovered as to the actual functions of the Lowell School District #71, it is likely that the school did indeed act as a socializing influence within the Lowell community. When the school moved into new educational facilities in 1940, the building continued to host community events. The Lowell Grange #745, began its occupation of the building in 1941 and has continued to serve the community as a center for social and service activity ever since.

The Grange Movement

Order of the Patrons of Husbandry motto:

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

The Grange, a fraternal order also known as the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, was founded on December 4, 1867 in Washington D.C. The group is the "nation's oldest agricultural organization, with grassroots units established in 3,600 local communities in 37 states. Its 300,000 members provide service to agriculture and rural areas on a wide variety of issues, including economic development, education, family endeavors and legislation designed to assure a strong and viable rural America."³¹

The Grange was the brainchild of Oliver Hudson Kelley, a farmer from Minnesota, who saw a need for a national organization that would represent farmers in rural America. Similar to the unions that represented industrial workers at the time, the Grange would protect these individuals from railroads, warehouse companies and merchants who threatened to take advantage of them. As stated in the Grange literature, they provided assistance when the government couldn't and individuals alone weren't strong enough. "By working together the Grange [built] community and people"³²

²⁷ The addition has a band of windows along only one wall. This reflects changing attitudes about school standards in the early 20th century. Recommended window placement involved lighting only one side of the school house. Windows on more than one wall (cross-lighting) were thought to be detrimental to students' sight as well as attention spans. See: James Johnnot, *School Houses*, (New York: J.W. Schermerhon and Co., 1871).

²⁸ *Lakeside News*, 10 February, 1972.

²⁹ James E. Meacham and others. *Atlas of Lane County, Oregon*. (Eugene: Aster publishing Co., 1990), 34.

³⁰ Osgood. Also, see map for school district locations.

³¹ All information from Maggie Osgood calendar research project.

³¹ The National Grange Website, <http://www.nationalgrange.org/about/history.html> (4/22/04).

³² *Ibid*.

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This fraternal group was one of the first to admit women as members; they were seen as equals to their male counterparts within the organization. Granges have also historically served as community centers in rural areas and have evolved over the past 137 years to support not only agricultural interests but a variety of community service projects and social events as well.

The Grange organization was extremely important to these isolated communities as a place for social interaction, a place to break up the monotony of daily chores and farm labor. As Donald B. Marti writes in *Women of the Grange*, "the [Granges] fostered cooperative enterprises, called for economic reforms, and tried to improve farmer's social and intellectual lives by bringing neighbors together for what were intended to be enjoyable and stimulating meetings."³³ The grange is comprised of four divisions: the National Grange in Washington D.C., the State Grange, The Pomona or regional Grange and lastly, the Subordinate Grange. The Lowell Grange falls into this final subdivision.

Lowell Grange History

Lowell Grange was organized during World War I and located in an old skating rink near the base of Lowell Butte was used for a Grange Hall.³⁴ From the skating rink, the Grange moved to the upstairs room of the Lowell Market as the skating rink was then used for drying hops from the local hop yard. The skating rink is no longer extant. The Grange was later located in the new 1932 high school building, and on February 25, 1930, a new charter was received and the group became known as Lowell Grange No. 745³⁵.

In 1941, the Grange purchased the Lowell School building from Wilbur and Daisy Hyland for \$450.00. "The Grange Members assessed themselves \$124.00 to make the first payment of \$200 to School District #71. The \$250.00 balance was to be paid within one year at 5% interest. The Grange signed a note for this amount. In 1942, the Grange members had scrap iron drives that gathered 45 tons and sold for \$252.72. This money was used to help pay the note on the hall." As in previous years, the Lowell Grange functioned as an important local social organization to, and for the community from its new home in the old Lowell School building.

Entries made in the Secretary's Record Book for Lowell Grange in the years 1941-42, provided information on Grange activities in the years following the acquisition of the building. In November of 1941, the Grange hosted its annual Thanksgiving Dinner and after dinner events included readings, group singing, games and dancing. Money was often raised and donated to charitable organizations and the members were approving the use of the building by various outside community groups at almost each meeting. On May 26, 1942 a motion was carried that the Grange sponsor a contest on rodent control.

Excerpts from the document containing Lowell Grange's history indicate that on December 3, 1943, the Grange members started "putting on plays by Bert Hadley. The admission was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children." By 1946, a stage was built for such productions and "the Grange leased the Hall to Mr. Chaney to use for moving picture shows."

Evelyn Henderson, a Lowell resident, has been involved with the Grange in various capacities since 1967. She has served as the Secretary for the past twenty years and has been the secretary –treasurer for the past two years. She has also played a role as a musician at Grange functions. A telephone interview with Ms. Henderson provided some examples of past Grange projects.³⁶

Annual events in which the Grangers participated included plays organized by the Pomona Grange where members from all 26 Lane County Granges took part. Additionally, the Lowell Grange members set up a booth each year at the Lane County Fair in order to

³³ Donald B. Marti, *Women of the Grange: Mutuality and Sisterhood in Rural America, 1866-1920*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 2.

³⁴ The information in this section was gathered from various yearbooks compiled by the Grange Ladies (C.W.A) and from a written history of the Grange which had neither date nor author information. Specific sources will be noted.

³⁵ The Lowell Grange had been previously known as Lowell White Oak, #531.

³⁶ Telephone Interview with Mrs. Evelyn Henderson, by the author on May 17, 2004.

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spread awareness about the function and activities of the Grange. The Lowell Grangers raised funds that aided in the creation of the McKenzie-Willamette hospital and held a Chili Dinner that produced \$700.00 to aid the family of an Oakridge girl with Leukemia. They have been instrumental in raising money through various means for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the United Way of Lane County, as well as in collecting hearing aids and batteries for the deaf.

In addition to these outreach and social service functions, the Grange has always acted as sponsor and host to a variety of community social events. According to Mrs. Henderson, such events included Mother's and Father's Day breakfasts, dances, lectures, plays and games such as pinochle and bingo. They also sponsor the Cub Scouts of Lowell, Pack 102, who hold their meetings in the building.

At the height of the Grange movement in Oregon (1940), there were 371 active Granges dispersed throughout the state. As Grange members get older and society becomes increasingly urbanized, membership in these once flourishing social organizations declines. As of 2005, there are 213 active Granges in the state of Oregon. Some, like the Long Tom Grange in Junction City are thriving as active community groups, while many others are faced with the prospect of closing for lack of community interest.³⁷

Mrs. Henderson recalls that when she came to the Grange, there were "lots of grangers, and lots going on." Even into recent years, the Grange has served to unite this small community. However, Grange activity has decreased during the past five years or so, according to Mrs. Henderson, and it has been difficult to keep up attendance at the monthly meetings. The building is still being used, however, by other community groups for functions that range from school graduation parties to weekly AA meetings.

Recent History of Lowell

The construction of Dexter and Lookout Point Reservoirs, the two reservoirs nearest to Lowell, was authorized by congress in 1936. Flooding had been a persistent problem in the Willamette Valley and a system of reservoirs was constructed in the area by the army Corps of Engineers to correct this issue. Construction began in 1947 and was ultimately completed in the Lowell area by 1955. Agriculture and stock raising were still the primary pursuits of the area residents prior to the construction of the dams.³⁸

The construction of the Lookout Point and Dexter Reservoirs left its mark on this rural community. According to the Six Reservoirs study, the "small but long-established town of Lowell enjoyed a small boom during the dam construction. Before the dams, the population of Lowell was quite small. There were also no sewer or water lines."³⁹ The government alleviated this problem by installing a water tank and both sewer and water lines for the town.

Corps workers lived in Lowell during dam construction as well, and the "business was good for the town, which grew to have three grocery stores and a liquor store plus other services."⁴⁰ These businesses closed however, when the construction was completed and the workers left. As a result of the reservoir construction, Lowell became further removed from the main transportation routes; the Willamette Highway (no.58) and the Southern Pacific Railway were subsequently rerouted to the south bank of the river.

In 1954, the Lowell Grange Hall was the location where 119 voters voted 73 to 46 in favor of city incorporation. Upon completion of the dams, the government withdrew from the town and was willing to sell the water tank and sewer lines, but only to a formal government unit. Thus, the citizens voted for incorporation and became Lane County's ninth city.⁴¹

³⁷ *The Oregonian* (Portland), 9 January, 2005.

³⁸ *Six Reservoirs*, 119.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Eugene Register-Guard*, 8 July 1954.

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Today, Lowell still retains its rural character and small town feeling with a population of about 1,000 residents. Little development seems to have happened since the dam construction with the exception of some modern lakeside residential construction. Its residents form a close community and were highly supportive of work being done which would help preserve the Grange building, one of the last historic resources that remains from the early years of the 20th century.

In sum, this building is a significant representation of Lowell's history, an importance elevated as the last surviving historic public building in the community. Although the building represents its earliest history as the Lowell School, alterations made after the Lowell Grange became the owners more clearly exemplify the building as a grange hall and center for community activities. The addition of the stage area and the kitchen area illustrate the shift in use from a school to a grange hall. These alterations, along with minor others, are historic in their own right and remain intact today. The building, therefore, is being nominated under Criterion A for its association with the history of the local grange and for its importance as a community center.

The residents of Lowell would like to see their historic school building preserved and recognized as a monument to their long history as a rural Oregon community.

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- "Lowell to Become Ninth Lane City". *Eugene Register-Guard*, 8 July 1954. (author unknown)
- "Lore 'n' Legend." By Vina King. *Lakeside News*, 10 February, 1972.
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Lowell Grange
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Maps

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The National Grange
<http://www.nationalgrange.org/about/history.html> (4/22/04).

Lowell Grange
Name of Property

Lane County, OR
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 10 517526 4862939
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sarah K. Hahn

organization University of Oregon, Historic Preservation Program date June 5, 2004

street & number 1568 Polk Street telephone 541.334.5143

city or town Eugene state OR zip code 97402

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation sheets

Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name Lowell Grange #745 Contact: Mayor Warren Weathers

street & number 51 East 2nd Street telephone 541.937.3738

city or town Lowell state OR zip code 97452

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Lowell Grange
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Verbal Boundary Description

Tax Lot # 4400 located on Block 2 in Township 19S, Range 1 W, Section 14; also known as the northeast corner lot at the intersection of Second and Moss Streets in Lowell, Oregon.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes current parcel of land occupied by Lowell Grange #745.

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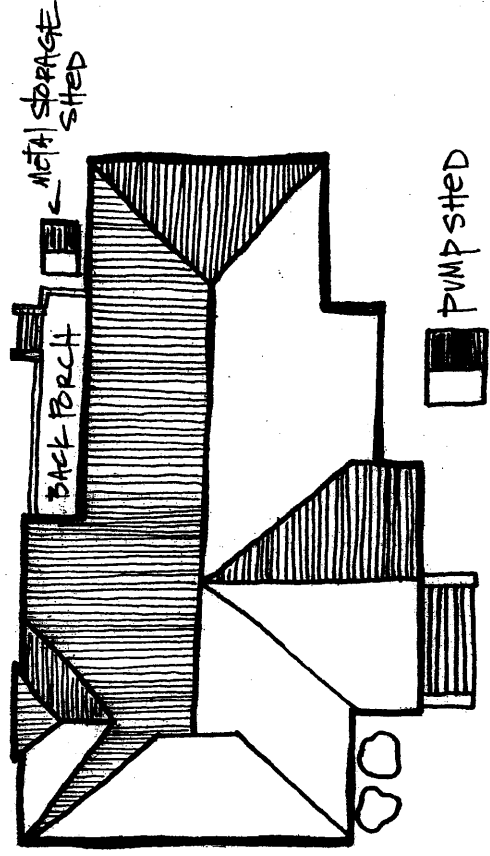
Photographs

1. Building from southwest corner, showing front (south) and west facades
2. Building from northwest corner, showing west and back (north) facades
3. Building from northeast corner showing back (north) and east facades
4. Building from southeast corner showing east and front (south) facades; pump house
5. Front porch and main entry
6. Meeting hall looking west from stage
7. Meeting hall looking east from kitchen toward stage
8. Stage in meeting hall
9. Banquet hall looking south from kitchen
10. Banquet hall looking north toward kitchen
11. Kitchen looking east from west end
12. Entry vestibule – doorway to meeting hall (left), closet (right), women's restroom (behind open closet door)
13. Women's restroom

Residence

Moss Street

Residence



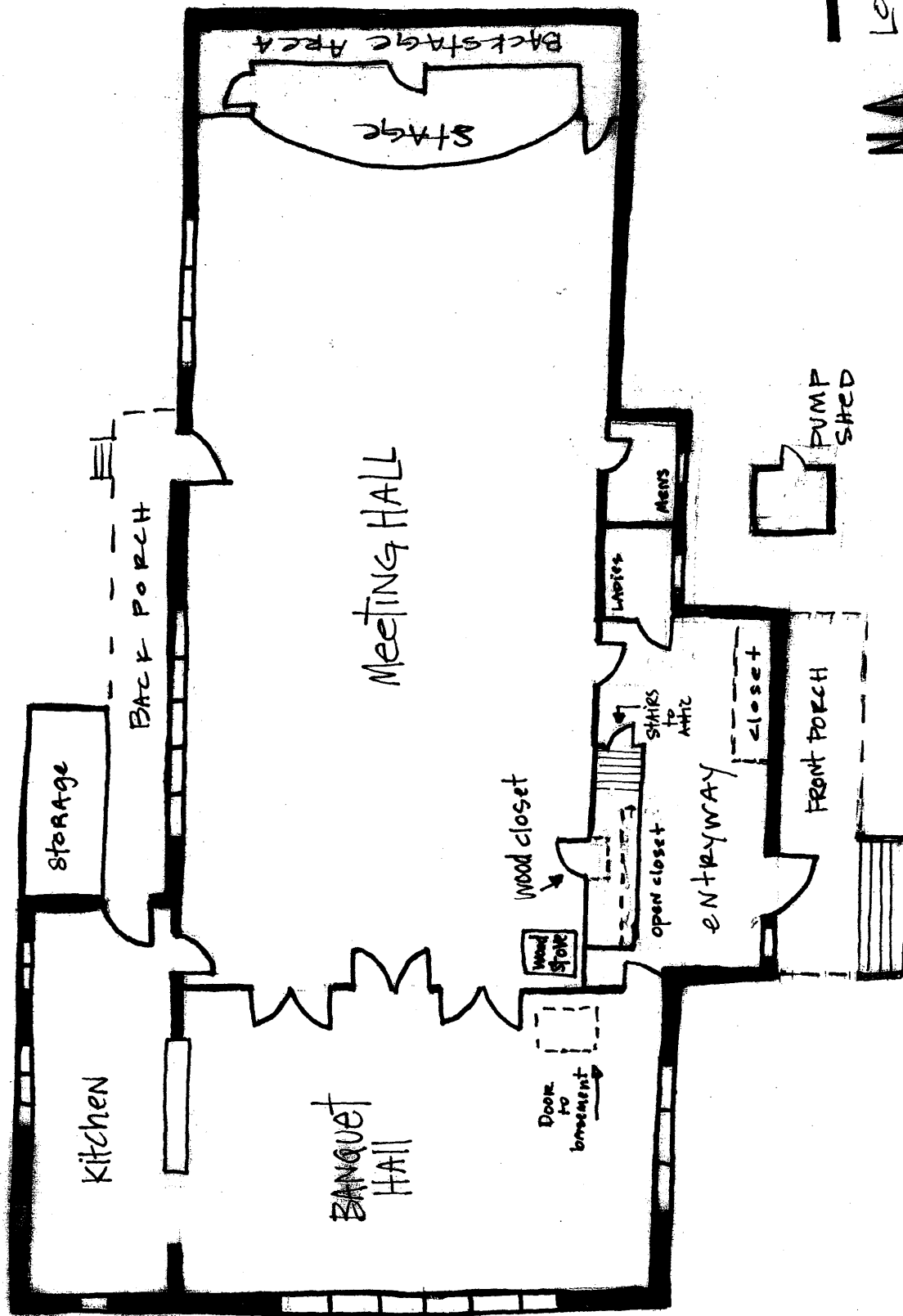
Lowell School
 4/3/04
 SARAH HATHN
 SITE PLAN
 not to scale

GRANGE SIGN

GRAVEL PARKING AREA

• 51 East 2nd Street •

NA



NA

Lowell School
 Floor Plan
 Not to Scale
 4/31/04
 by: SARAH HAHN