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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

OCT 8 1987

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name California Fruit Store
other names/site number Freya Boat Works, Blue Bird Cafe

2. Location

street & number 909 Third Street
city, town Anacortes
state Washington code 053 county Skagit code 057 zip code 98221

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked)
Category of Property: building(s) (checked)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Jacob Z. [Signature]
Date: 9/29/87
Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register. (checked)
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade - Specialty Store

Commerce/Trade - Restaurant

Domestic - Unknown

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Industry - Manufacturing Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other - Commercial Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Wood

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Glass

Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The California Fruit Store building is a well-preserved, two story wood frame commercial building constructed about 1900. Virtually unaltered since construction, it is in excellent condition and retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It has had numerous uses over its lifetime including saloon, grocery store, and apartments. It is currently in use as a boat-building shop with an apartment on the second floor.

The building is located in the middle of Block 25, Lots 5 and 6, in the Original Plat of Anacortes in Skagit County, Washington. It faces north toward Guemes Channel, two blocks to the north, from the south side of Third Street. Across an intervening vacant lot to the west lies the Bensen Motors Building, a large concrete structure constructed c. 1930. Across Third Street to the north are the shipyards of Dakota Creek Industries. To the east of the nominated property, on the corner of the block, is a small concrete block structure. In the southern part of the block, to the rear of the building, lies a mixed use area ranging from substantial brick commercial buildings to early 20th century apartment houses and single family residences.

The California Fruit Store was moved from its original location, approximately one block away on Commercial Avenue, some time between 1925 and 1930. It appears that it was moved to make way for the Abbott Motor Company building which was built in approximately 1928. The original location was on part of Lots 1, 2, and 3, Block 32 of Anacortes. It was mid-block between Third and Fourth Streets, on the west side of Commercial Avenue. The then-south (side) elevation abutted an alley which bisected the block from east to west. A 1907 Sanborn Insurance Map indicates that at that time the then-north (side) elevation abutted a wood building of the same approximate size.

In its original location, the California Fruit Store building was in the heart of the city's historic commercial core. Today this area consists of a main street, Commercial Avenue, running north-south, flanked by two parallel streets of mixed use, which form the transitions to residential and other non-commercial uses. Its length is approximately seven blocks, from Second to Ninth Street. The northern edge abuts the Port of Anacortes' Ocean Dock and shipyard on Guemes Channel. The south end makes an indistinct transition to the commercial strip which extends southward a number of blocks. A number of buildings dating to the turn-of-the-century remain within the area; however, the majority of these have been altered and retain little or no physical integrity. A notable exception is a complex of well-preserved late 19th and early 20th century buildings, the Marine Supply and Hardware Complex, consisting of four structures, which is located approximately one block away from subject building on Commercial Avenue. Together with these buildings, the California Fruit Store Building is the last commercial building from that period which survives intact. At its present site, the building is located only a block east of its

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original location and thus still within the confines of the community's historic business district.

Exterior: The California Fruit Store is a two-story building, approximately 27 by 64 feet, of frame construction. It is rectangular in plan with a small, one-story, six by 17 foot, shed addition on the rear (south) elevation. The addition, which is sheathed in drop siding, appears to be quite early. A temporary frame has been attached at the east elevation of the main building to shelter boat-building activities. Construction of the frame has not adversely affected the integrity of the building.

The building has a flat roof concealed from view by a parapet wall with prominent, bracketed cornice which extends across the facade and approximately 12 feet back on both the east and west elevations. The entire building is sheathed in five inch drop siding with corner boards. The foundation is post and pier. There is no basement.

The facade consists of a recessed, central entrance fitted with glass-paneled double doors with transom and sidelight. The porch stoop is wood as are the three steps which rise from the sidewalk. The entrance is flanked by large plate glass windows. The paneled and glazed door appears to be original as do the wood frames and muntins of the windows. Above the entry at the second story is a rectangular bay window with flash glass in the upper third of the front window.

Windows are primarily one-over-one double-hung sash with simple architrave molding, two of which are on the facade flanking the projecting bay. There are seven on the second story of the east elevation and one on the first floor. In addition, there are two smaller double-hung sash also on the first floor. The west side of the building has seven windows including one small fixed pane window. There are three standard windows on the rear elevation as well as several smaller, casement windows which were added at a later date. A small paneled door is located on the east (side) elevation. The only alterations to the exterior of the building are the addition of a sliding door on overhead rollers on the east elevation located to the north of the small paneled door, as well as the shed-roof addition and small windows noted above.

Interior: The first floor of the building consists of a large room with a small office at the rear. A stairway between the rooms provides access to the second story which consists of seven rooms: living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, den, and bath. In recent years the floor plan has been altered. Originally it consisted of nine rooms, four of which have been consolidated to form two larger rooms: one at the rear of the building and one at the front. A long narrow hall originally extended down the center of the second floor; however, this has been opened up and incorporated into a room on the west side.

Floors throughout the building consist of three inch fir boards running the length of the building. Window and door trim is simple and unadorned. Originally the walls consisted of boards over which wallpaper was applied; however, most walls have since been sheet rocked.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1900

Significant Dates

c. 1900

c. 1925

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The California Fruit Store is a locally significant example of a wood frame commercial building from the turn of the century, distinguished by a "false front" parapet with bracketed cornice, box bay window, and well preserved storefront. Numerous commercial buildings of the type once lined the streets of Anacortes' early business district. But today only a handful remain, almost all of which have been extensively altered. The California Fruit Store is one of the last surviving and best preserved examples of a once common vernacular building type.

The coming of the railroad had a tremendous influence on the early development of Anacortes. Prior to 1889-90 the area consisted of isolated settlements, scattered along the waterfront. By the mid-1880's, however, enormous enthusiasm was being generated throughout Washington Territory for a transcontinental railway terminus in the region. Promoters, land speculators and others believed that the natural deepwater harbor at Anacortes was an ideal location for the terminus. Fueled by the speculation, the area grew almost overnight from a collection of small settlements to a small city of broad streets and substantial buildings. The boom collapsed in 1892 when the Northern Pacific Railroad selected Tacoma as its terminus.

Beginning in the late 1890's, the community began to recover from the collapse of the boom and the subsequent depression. In doing so it began to awaken to the potential for exploitation of the rich natural resources lying at its doorstep, particularly timber and fisheries. Between 1900 and 1910 the city once again experienced a tremendous boom, though not nearly as spectacular as the first. During this time the population increased more than four-fold as people moved to the area to work in the rapidly growing new industries. Numerous commercial buildings were built lining Commercial Avenue between Second and Ninth Streets. They were particularly dense closer to the waterfront where economic activity was centered. The Sanborn Insurance Map for the year 1907 shows numerous wooden structures of the same approximate type as the California Fruit Store. The majority of historic buildings which survive today date to this period.

The development of Anacortes' commercial core followed the same pattern as many other western Washington towns. The early buildings were small wooden structures, generally with a gabled roof and false front with cornice. Often constructed in slapdash fashion they were usually without a foundation. There are very few of these early buildings remaining

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jackson, David. Interview, June 17, 1987, Anacortes, Washington.
Land Title Company Records, Mt. Vernon, Washington.
McKee, Mr. and Mrs. Don. Interview, June 2, 1987, Anacortes, Washington.
Mitchell, Bill. Interview, June 1, 1987, Anacortes, Washington.
Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1907, 1914, 1925, 1935.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one

UTM References

A

1	0
5	2
8	7
8	0

5	3
7	3
9	9
0	0

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 5, Block 25, Original Plat of Anacortes. Within the Northwest quarter of the Southwest quarter of Section 18, Township 35 North, Range 2 East, Willamette Meridian.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Koler

organization Koler/Morrison Consultants date June 30, 1987

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city or town Portland state WA zip code 97212

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in the city. The high attrition was due primarily to the rapid growth of the community during the boom years and corresponding replacement of the early buildings with larger and more substantial structures.

The California Fruit Store building represents the second phase of development. It was constructed some time prior to 1907, when it was first documented on a Sanborn Insurance Map. Title records indicate that it was probably built no earlier than 1900, when the three lots on which it was constructed were consolidated in ownership. In that year, Maggie Elliot purchased the south 28 feet of Lots 1, 2, and 3. In 1902 her estate sold the property to well-known and prominent early citizen Gus Hensler. Three years later Hensler sold it to L.M. Turner who in turn sold it to a man named Shaughnessy. It was in his ownership until 1921 when Ellen M. Coody inherited the building. In that same year it was purchased by Harrietta Inason. It appears that Inason was responsible for moving the building to its present location. She retained ownership of the property until 1929 when it was sold to J.C. Farrell; however, she also owned the property on Third Street to which the building was moved. In addition to title records which support the approximate date of the move, Sanborn maps indicate that a livery stable occupied the new site in 1925. As the Abbott Motors building was constructed in approximately 1928-29, it can be concluded that subject building was moved between 1925 and 1928-29. Local informants report that it was moved by a German man who "went crazy" in the midst of the move and left the building standing in the middle of Commercial Avenue for many months.

The earliest recorded use of the property was as a saloon on the first floor with apartment on the second floor in 1907. It continued as such through 1914. Some time between then and 1918, the first floor was converted to a grocery named the California Fruit Store. It occupied the building through 1925 and possibly right up to the time of the move. After the move the building was occupied by a number of different firms. For many years it was known as the Blue Bird Cafe, operated by "Blue Bird Bill," and later reverted to use as a grocery. It was vacant for a number of years prior to being converted to a boat building shop.

Virtually unaltered since construction, the California Fruit Store Building is an exceedingly fine example of the Victorian commercial buildings which once lined the streets of the downtown business district. Although the builder is not known, the building reflects many of the characteristic features associated with vernacular commercial buildings of the period. The relatively modest frame structure is given a sense of permanence and style through the use of the false front parapet, bracketed cornice, and bay window on the front facade. The storefront below, however, is straightforward and functional, with large display windows and a central recessed entry. With the exception of one building in the Marine Hardware and Supply complex, no other frame structure in the city reflects the same degree of Victorian features and integrity. Although moved in 1925 to accommodate construction of a new automobile dealership, the present location is only one block east of the original site and still within the historic business district.