

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JAN 30 1979

DATE ENTERED

MAR 15 1979

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 Hot Lake Resort

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION SE of La Grande on OR 203

STREET & NUMBER Route 2, Box 2623

CITY, TOWN

LaGrande *me* VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Second

STATE

Oregon CODE 41

COUNTY CODE  
Union 061

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Hot Lake Development Company, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER Route 2, Box 2623

CITY, TOWN

LaGrande VICINITY OF

STATE  
Oregon 97850

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Union County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

LaGrande

STATE  
Oregon 97850

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties

DATE

1976  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Salem

STATE  
Oregon 97310

## 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 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

Hot Lake Sanatorium--the focal point of existing development in the 15-acre area proposed for nomination--is a three-story, U-shaped structure of brick and concrete measuring some 216 feet across the front and 148 feet from front to rear, give or take 40 feet for various single story add-ons. Its floor space encompasses approximately 65,000 square feet. An example of what contemporary architects might have called "Free Classic" design, the 1906 sanatorium is a straightforward building reflecting its essential utility and having a hipped roof covered with ribbed sheet metal, overhanging eaves bracketed at wall corners, regular trabeated fenestration, and a facade organization including projecting corner pavilions with quoining and a smaller central entrance pavilion. The most prominent historical reference in the scheme is the long, enclosed frame veranda, or solarium extending the full length of the facade and across the front of a neighboring "Georgian" frame residence on the west end as well. Composed of paired columns and multiples of small fixed panes, the solarium is, with its central two-story portico and decorative deck railings, an inspiration of the then current Colonial Revival.

#### Foundation

The building is seated upon a solid, low rock-faced stone foundation which underlies the entire building, including both the one-story wooden solarium as well as the main brick walls and interior walls of the structure. The structural support provided by the foundation is particularly sound.

#### Solarium

The one-story solarium with deck is of wood and glass construction with 2½ foot high panelling at the base. The 18-pane bays are interspersed between paired columns separated by two narrow, long vertical panes of glass. The section east of the entrance requires major rehabilitation in that the uprights which appear to be of solid construction are in fact composed of four pieces and have therefore shifted badly. All columns on the left half will be replaced with solid structural material to provide needed support without destroying the exterior effect.

Additionally, to meet code requirements concerning exterior access and to create new usable spaces, suites will be developed by separating the now unused solarium into reasonably sized individual areas integrated with the guest rooms now opening into the solarium.

#### Porch

The focal element of the front elevation is the two-story portico formed of four colossal Tuscan columns and decks at each level. The round columns are of wooden-beam centers and wire strap-bound boards. As was the case in the past, windows will be re-installed between the columns to "glass-in" the ground story porch. A classical porte-cochere will be designed to extend from the portico.

The second story deck will be half glass-enclosed to provide two smallish two-room suites. The railing will be restored to the top deck, which will become a patio for the third-story reading and writing room.

Continued

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Brick Work and Windows

The brick work is American Bond type, and there is an as yet unsubstantiated rumor that the bricks were acquired from a manufacturer in Montana to insure quality. The brick work is finished with quoins and flat arches over openings. Window sashes are double hung--of two sizes, one for guest rooms and smaller ones for bathrooms.

"Georgian House"

Adjacent to the sanatorium, on the west end, is a three-story wood frame residence which is approximately contemporary with the sanatorium. This clapboarded and hip-roofed structure has a formal facade with arcuated fenestration, including two large windows in semi-elliptical arched openings at the second story. This structure will be rennovated as a single, large suite available to parties and distinguished guests.

Roofs

The sanatorium hipped roofs are covered with galvanized sheet metal and are in excellent condition. Current management has replaced the almost flat southwest wing roof with new tarpaper. Beneath box cornices, the soffit is made of 2½ inch interlocking siding board which creates a pleasantly finished look. At each corner the cornice is fitted with simple, paired consoles now the nesting sites of swallows which return annually to Hot Lake.

Third Floor, East Wing

The third floor of the east wing comprises the old hospital and rest home portion of the resort. The northeast corner houses the operating room, which is completely finished in white ceramic tile--floor, ceiling and walls. A glass-enclosed viewing room overlooks the operating room. The operating room commands a panoramic view of the Grande Ronde Valley to the north and east.

Near the viewing room on the east face, is an oriel which lights the marble and tile-finished lavatory, where the surgeon was said to have prepared and looked over the property prior to each operation.

At the northeast corner one of the oldest Otis iron cage elevators in the area provides access to all floors. Plans are underway to utilize this interesting equipment. An open stairwall also provides access between floors. The latter is centrally located directly in front of the main lobby area. The stairway had been remodeled, and building codes will determine what can be done to return it to its former configuration.

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Main Floor Administration and Victorian Bars

The main lobby area will be renovated with a registration desk to be placed in front of what will be the control center and telephone switchboard room. Also on the main floor, work has started in the area designated for a cocktail bar in the center front of the hotel. A number of non-load bearing walls have been removed in a series of former small, cluttered rooms to create a charming room for a large Victorian bar of two distinct characters. The interior bar area will be completed in oak and other woods with some exposed brick. This dark, masculine bar will feature a large backbar, piano, white clothed tables with glass and pewter accoutrements. The bar will display some bizarre x-ray equipment which will be hooked up. An eerie high voltage, Jacob's Ladder drawing energy from the voltage precipitator will command the center of the bar area.

The area between the brick wall and the solarium windows will be a white, light and airy day-bar with white walls and white wicker furniture. The windows will display numerous pieces of specially designed stained glass of period motif. This area will be rich with ferns, potted palms, objects de art, and canaries in gilded cages.

Dining Room-Phase I

Through the completion of 50 rooms, the main dining room will be the large room adjoining the interior U-shaped courtyard. The breakfast dining room will be the room directly west of the larger room. The largest existing room, which lies under the "Georgian" house, formerly a ballroom and lobby, will be initially reserved for banquets, dances, lectures, theatre and the like.

Dining and Banquet-Phase II

With the completion of all 105 guest rooms, the main banquet and conference center room will be completed by covering over the U-shaped courtyard with an enclosure of structural timbers, several mezzanines, as much of the old building exposed as possible--all covered by a great canopy of stained glass depicting the beauty of the region. This facility will seat approximately 700 persons for dining and will in part make up for the dining space lost in the 1934 fire.

To coincide with the new room, kitchen facilities will be moved up into the former breakfast room. The main dining room will be moved to the ballroom area which will be finished off with a top row of stained glass, rich wood and velvet covered booths along the walls, rich tapestries, gold trim, rich green carpet, white table cloths, and a partial rejuvenation of the existing marvelous tiled floor. This elegant area will feature non-disco dancing to complement the dining schedule. A breakfast area will be finished in the one-story structure to the west of the ballroom.

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Disco and Pool

There will be a disco, probably for part time use, located in the west portion of the 1900 show barn to the east. A 10-foot-high permanent wall will be built around an Olympic-sized mineral pool to the west of the main building complete with windows very similar to the solarium front of the hotel. The pool will be covered during winter, and the roof style has not yet been set. The natural vapor sauna afforded by the stuccoed octagonal spring house, which is on the lake front near the new pool site, is to be retained, and the spring house refurbished.

Spa and Meeting Rooms

The southwest corner of the first floor of the west wing is an existing complex of spa facilities. A number of clawfoot bathtubs are located in these one-story solid brick rooms which all have skylights. There are also two hot mineral water saunas. The tubs empty into a mud drain for mud baths. Several of the rooms have concrete floors. An exercise room will be put in this area. Under the phase-one program, prior to completion of 105 rooms, this area will be the spa and physical therapy center. A new spa will then be constructed as depicted on the site of the former spa. At that point in time, the existing spa facilities will be moved out and these interesting rooms will become conference facilities.

Hotel Support

East of the kitchen on the first floor are located the laundry room and its commercial equipment, a large amount of kitchen and service equipment and operating walk-in freezer and cold storage rooms. These facilities will be somewhat expanded as demand dictates. A large dumbwaiter is located adjoining the laundry and kitchen.

Bathrooms

There are presently in the building five or six major public bathrooms of white tile, marble and louvered wood door stalls. Existing guest room baths are of comfortable size and feature period claw-foot tubs. A major task of renovation will be the careful addition of more bathroom facilities.

Doors

Virtually all of the doors on the first and second floors are of five panel, five tier design which complement the use of balance and designs elsewhere. The doors on the third floor are wide solid-core hospital doors. Virtually all doors include windowed transoms.

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Flooring

There is hardwood flooring in generally good condition throughout most of the building and it will be utilized where possible.

Heating System

All rooms have at least one ornate vertical tube radiator of a turn of the century elliptical design rather than rounded. The radiators hold geothermally heated fresh water and are hooked to radiators located in a covered concrete retainer basin in front of the hotel which are filled with hot mineral spring water. There are no corrosive hot waters in the closed loop system which heats the hotel. The system is in good condition and being driven by convection, costs nothing to operate. The system will be upgraded through use of insulation, several circulating pumps and thermostats. The hot domestic water is provided by a similar smaller geothermal system running throughout the building. A chilled water cooling plant is planned based upon a geothermally driven refrigeration unit.

Public Rooms

Existing public rooms are elegant, though in need of restoration and feature gas and electric fixtures circa 1906, interesting cyma recta and scotia mouldings, most of them 12 inches or greater in size. Entrance to public areas is often gained through ornate shouldered architraved doors and entryways with circa 1906 victorian entablatures. Columns inside the building are of square shape with single panels and scotia moulding.

Architects and Engineers

The architects of the original building are not known. Present architectural consultants to the project are James Weber and Jim Crain of San Francisco, California, who have considerable restoration experience. Engineers for the project are Gordon Associates of Corvallis, Oregon. Both companies were chosen because of their sensitivity to the unique aspects of the project.

For example, Mr. Crain is the author of the widely used book, Historic Country Inns of California and has a grasp of the problems and potentiality of projects of this sort.

Gordon and Associates are the engineers for the geothermally heated expansion project at Oregon Institute of Technology, the largest single structure in the United States now heated with geothermal water.

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Work to Date

At present, having just completed the planning process and received requisite zoning approvals, renovation of four rooms, the pool and public areas has commenced. Four rooms have now been renovated and partially restored to their former elegance. The pastel colored plastered walls, dingy woodwork and dull dirty wood floors have been reworked. In place of the former uninspiring home for the aged, Hot Lake Hotel is beginning to emerge once again as a lively establishment.

Restored Rooms

When finished, each guest room will have appropriate wallpaper, antique furniture and hand-crafted reproductions of originals. Rooms will feature also antique mirrors and pictures, appropriate rugs, a mixture of brass, wrought iron and canopy beds. Restored bathrooms feature old commodes and restored claw-foot bath tubs.

Guest rooms feature adequate lighting of period style, ten-inch baseboard moulding and two-inch picture moulding bordering the top of the wallpaper and room. Mouldings will be produced at the site on a Bel Saw to be encounced in the carpentry shop behind the hotel. Floors are, of course, being refurbished. Additionally, all wood trim is being taken down to the natural wood grain and stained in fashion similar to those several hotel rooms still evidencing the original treatment on the second floor. Existing door and window trim date from original construction of 1906. A large number of excess original doors and casings are stored at the property, and will be used to supplement as needed.

Hallways

At one time most of the hallways were trimmed with wainscoting. After restoration, it is planned to use all hallways as an art gallery. To further the backdrop appeal, hallway doorways will be finished as described for the rooms, and wainscoting will be rebuilt to a height of three feet. Above wainscoting, paint and fabrics will be used together with proper lighting to display gallery art. The art exhibit will concentrate upon displays of regional work.

Fire Ramps

The large wooden fire escape ramps attached to the building at several points in the 1950s will be updated and used as allowed by code. Additional fire code requirements will be met with fire doors and flame-proof separating walls as required.

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Show Barn

South and east of the main building is located a large show barn measuring 30 by 125 feet, including the 16 foot shed. Carried out in the Shingle Style at approximately the time the old hotel was enlarged (ca. 1900), the structure is in fair condition today. Major renovation requirements include a new floor for the west half, overall plumbing and electrical installation, and tearing down a lean-to shed on the south side which is in very poor condition. In the second phase of development it is planned that this building will house a dormitory, discotheque, theater and seminar space.

Maintenance

Directly south of the main building are a number of garages which have been reorganized into maintenance shops which are now being fully equipped to carry out the restoration project.

Additional Accommodations

It is obvious that there is not sufficient space in the main building to justify the conference and convention facilities planned. With this in mind, two historically consistent projects will be added to the site. Once the hotel is completed, an 85-room structure will be built behind the maintenance facilities on the parking lot bench which extends from west of the barn to behind the hotel. This site was once occupied by certain structures which have not yet been suitably identified. It should be noted that the design of the planned structure is loosely patterned after the 1900 Shingle Style Hotel which burned to the ground in 1934. The location offers an outstanding view of the entire valley, and will set far enough back from the main building as not to intrude upon it induly.

Swimming Facilities

Today's resort requires adequate swimming facilities. The only logical location for new pools is to put them where they are now planned, west of the hotel, as part of the physical fitness and spa complex.

Location Characteristics

The property is located in Northeastern Oregon, two miles from Interstate 80, which is the four-lane interstate highway connecting Seattle, Portland, Boise and Denver. This interstate highway has an average daily traffic count in excess of 5,000 vehicles. The road leading from the Interstate to the property, Foothill Road, is joined at the interstate by the only full-fourway interchange within forty miles. The property is located approximately three hours from Boise, Idaho; four and one half hours from Portland, Oregon; two hours from TriCities, Washington and three and one half hours from Spokane, Washington.



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Air Transportation

The property is three minutes from the La Grande Municipal Airport, which is capable of handling the largest corporate business jets and turbo-props up to the size of the Lockheed Electra. This means that the site is located less than two and one half hours total elapsed travel time from Los Angeles in various types of aircraft capable of comfortably seating 98 passengers and at profitable charter rates.

The site is also located only 50 minutes bus driving time from Pendleton Airport which is serviced by two United Airlines routes. One route is San Francisco-Portland-Pendleton-Return and the other route includes major stops at Buffalo, Chicago, Salt Lake-Pendleton-Salt Lake, Chicago, Baltimore. Hot Lake Hotel will be promoted actively in these markets.

Other Regional Attractions

Hot Lake Hotel is located 40 minutes from Anthony Lakes Ski Resort, which is known for fine powder snow at the highest base elevation in the Northwest. While it is a smaller family oriented resort, its 1,100 weekend skiers will significantly use the facility in winter months. Joint promotional packages will be marketed since the hotel is a natural and complementary facility for this ski area which has no overnight facilities.

The second largest gondola ride in the United States at the Mt. Howard-Wallowa Lake recreation complex is approximately one hour and fifteen minutes from the property. Hells Canyon of the Snake River is located somewhat more than one and one half hours from the site. Many important old mining and logging ghost towns are located within one hour's driving time of the property.

Hot Lake is located in the Grande Ronde Valley, the large valley in agricultural use, completely surrounded by mountains. The Wallowa Whitman National Forest, which served in excess of 1,500,000 visitor days in 1976, is located less than five miles from the property by horseback. The property is, in fact, almost surrounded by National Forest and Wilderness Area, including the 293,000-acre Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, which lies only twelve miles East of the site. A bank of elk winter on the property, as does a band of mul deer which fatten on the hillside bunch grass year around. Bird life is abundant owing to the remnants of marshland adjoining Hot Lake, including the Ladd Marsh Wildlife Refuge. The town of Union, five miles away includes more than 200 original Victorian houses. The main line of the Union Pacific Railroad crosses the ranch and an Amtrack stop is expected upon attaining operating status.

Landscape Characteristics

The property as a whole comprises some 600 acres of surface land, including

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hillside and hilltop grazing land, fine sub-irrigated meadow pasture and garden land, a marsh, 35 acres of lakes, three miles of canals, a sewage lagoon and a tree-lined former entry road. There is a great deal of diversity about the site.

Entry Road

To set off the Hotel properly, a one-way entrance road will be put in along the base of the hill from Foothill Road to the hotel. This route follows the existing road bed of a former stage route. It will be improved upon by the addition of rock walls and appropriate new plantings.

Trees

Some 2,000 ten-foot Ponderosa Pine and Golden Willows have been purchased for transplanting to the site. These trees will immediately and dramatically improve the beauty of the property after planting next Spring. The United States Forest Service has agreed to cost-share the transplanting of 2,000 one to two foot seedlings up to 250 feet up the hillside directly behind the hotel.

Berms and Gardens

In front of the hotel, a bermed and terraced formal flower garden will cover the area between the entrance lobby and Lake Phy.

A berm of varying heights will stretch from the pool to the highway beside Hot Lake. A stone wall will be built between the highway and Hot Lake and Lake Phy to reduce the sound pollution which adversely affects the hotel.

A small park is planned between the existing pool and the hotel and in the area of the new pools. A park will also be built at the small warm-water spring located halfway down the entry road. In fact, the entire property will, over the course of time, become a garden carefully landscaped to offer variation through the seasons. Springs, ponds, and lazy canals abound on the site and are being incorporated into the master site plan.

Conservation-Technology

Approaches to conservation and other forms of appropriate technology will be demonstrated at the site through the auspices of the Alternative Energy Educational Foundation, a non-profit, tax-exempt education foundation established for this purpose. The former brick blacksmith shop will provide the first quarters for the technology museum. The site had an operating windmill before the turn of the century. Use of wind, geothermal, aquaculture, methane production and indigenous building material will be demonstrated at the site. Several grant programs are being pursued to further this aspect of the project. The agricultural equipment museum will be tied

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into the technology museum. It is probable that a relationship between the two will lead to an interesting re-examination of earlier techniques and possible applicability today. It is felt that this worthwhile activity will both attract visitors and also educate the public.

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Following is a recapitulation of subsidiary structures within the boundaries of the 15-acre area proposed for nomination.

1. Shown barn (ca. 1911) and detached shed. The barn is a two-story gable-roofed structure on concrete foundation measuring 30 x 120 feet and finished in the tradition of the Shingle Style. The ground story exterior walls are clapboarded. The roof and gable ends are shingle-clad. Either gable end is lighted by a pair of coupled windows with sixteen fixed panes each. On the front or northerly face, a central double leaf door hanging from an overhead track is sheltered by shingled gablet or hood on brackets. Ground story windows on this face are fixed lights of twelve small panes each. The upper story is lighted by two large formally-placed shingled dormer windows with gable roofs and ribbon windows of four lights with sixteen small panes each. A single-story lean-to addition on the southerly elevation extends the length of barn and has a metal roof cover. The barn is slated for rehabilitation. The small, single-story detached shed in front of the barn may be removed or relocated elsewhere on the site in time.
2. Bungalow (ca. 1930) and Ranch house (1890s). Two frame dwellings ranging in date from ca. 1890 to 1930 presently are situated in the area southerly of Lake Phy and lying between the show barn and the sanitorium of 1906. The older of these, a 1½ story hip-roofed and clapboarded building of 1890-1900, is believed to have been moved onto the site from a neighborhood ranch in the 1930s. Both buildings may be relocated and used elsewhere on the site, as they are in the area slated for parking.
3. Automobile and Maintenance sheds (ca. 1910). To the rear of the sanitorium of 1906 is a long, metal-clad frame shed situated at the toe of the hill. Its historic use as a storage and maintenance building will be continued. Catwalks extend from third story of the southerly ends of the sanitorium's rear wings to the hillside, bridging the maintenance shed below. A smaller detached shed of similar style and vintage lies off the east end of the larger shed.
4. Diving pool, pumphouse, and spring house (ca. 1906). Northwesterly of the sanitorium, at the southerly end of Hot Lake, are the diving pool, pump house, and historic octagonal, stuccoed concrete spring house which will serve as a natural vapor sauna in the new enterprise. The single-story structure has a window of eight lights in metal sash in each facet except the south face, in which the entrance is located, sheltered by a hip-roofed portico. The porch roof and pyramidal roof of the main structure are shingle-clad. A concrete block chimney is centered at the apex of the roof.

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5. Blacksmith shop (c. 1911). Lying at the westernmost edge of the proposed boundary, southwesterly of Hot Lake, is the single-story rectangular brick masonry structure with gable roof and brick flue which historically served as the blacksmith shop. Its flat-arched windows are filled with double-hung wood sash with six lights over six. The building is to be retained in situ and adaptively used as an interpretive facility.

Subsidiary structures outside the boundaries of the 15-acre area proposed for nomination are few and essentially unrelated to the historic period of the resort. These lie to the west of the blacksmith shop and include a small, hip-roofed and clapboarded dog kennel (south of the access road and against the base of the hill) and three frame dwellings ranging in date from 1930 to 1940 and which are presently under separate ownership.

New construction within the 15-acre area proposed for nomination involves three sites: the new hotel building between the show barn and sanitorium; additional dining facilities in the courtyard of the sanitorium, and a porte-cochere; and an olympic-size pool and spa facilities between the sanitorium and blacksmith shop, at the southerly end of Hot Lake. The area to be taken up by the new hotel is not accurately shown on the site plan. It is thought that it actually will be smaller in proportion, and, thus, the brick sanitorium of 1906 will remain the prominent feature of the resort.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
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<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Recreation
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1864.-1932 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Hot Lake Resort on the southerly margin of Union County's Grande Ronde Valley was one of the largest and best known of numerous health spas and mineral hot spring resorts which flourished in Oregon during the railroad era and the early years of the automobile age. In its original form, the lake--some 300 yards in circumference--was fed by a sulphur spring and had an outlet into the Grande Ronde River. It was surrounded by marshlands, most of which were drained in later years, and the explorer-trappers and earliest immigrants attested to its importance to the native population as a hunting and gathering place and a place of healing.

The development of Hot Lake as a resort began in 1864 with construction of a hotel & dance hall. The second hotel at the site, a long, rectangular two and a half story gable roofed building of frame construction with dormer windows and a second story porch deck overlooking the lake, was incorporated into an expanded rectilinear facility in the tradition of the Shingle Style around 1900. About the time of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, observed in Portland in 1905, a second expansion was in the making, and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company, which made Hot Lake a stopping place on the line which passed close by at the north end of the lake, promoted the newest development--a \$150,000 three-story brick and concrete sanatorium in the Colonial Revival vein. Within the complex lined along the narrow corridor between the lake and the foothills of Craig Mountain, the new building became the primary facility. Lying to the east, it was detached from the older hotel and, in fact, separated by a frame residence of three stories also in the Georgian tradition. Said to have been patterned after the "leading and most modern" bathhouses at Hot Springs, Arkansas, this latest addition was opened for use in 1906.

The 1906 sanatorium, or hospital is the focal point of what remains of the historic resort development today. The hotel building of ca. 1900 was destroyed by fire in 1934. In addition to the hospital, there are several ancillary structures associated with the historic period within the fifteen-acre area proposed for inclusion in the National Register. These are a Shingle Style show barn of about 1900, the three-story residence in the Georgian vein, an octagonal stuccoed spring house, and a single-story brick blacksmith shop. Current development plans call for retention and rehabilitation of the historic structures and new construction to reactivate the long-dormant resort as a health spa, recreation and convention center. As in the historic period, the on-site geothermal resource will be harnessed to heat the complex.

Continued

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Hug, Bernal D., ed., History of Union County, Oregon (LaGrande: Eastern Oregon Review, 1961), 183-185.
- Courtwright, Larry, "A History of Hot Lake Sanatorium", typescript, 1965. Eastern Oregon State College Library.
- Walton, Elisabeth, "Spas, Coastal Resorts, and Mountain Retreats", Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), vol. 2, 382-383. (continued)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Ca. 15

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	4 2 5 0 5 0	5 0 1 0 3 8 0	B	1 1	4 2 5 0 5 0	5 0 1 0 0 2 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1 1	4 2 4 7 9 0	5 0 1 0 0 2 0	D	1 1	4 2 4 7 9 0	5 0 1 0 3 8 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached continuation sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Stephen M. Munson, President

ORGANIZATION

Hot Lake Development Company, Inc.

DATE

August, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Route 2, Box 2623

TELEPHONE

(503) 963-9100

CITY OR TOWN

LaGrande

STATE

Oregon 97850

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE  X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*David G. Tolbat*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 22, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Charles A. ...*

DATE

3-15-79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

*W. Ray ...*

DATE

3/15/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Early Buildings

In 1864 Samuel Newhart came into the Grande Ronde Valley from California. Upon learning of the curative qualities of the hot springs, Newhart built a hotel, spa and dance hall at the site in cooperation with a man named Clark. The original buildings faced into the hillside, oriented toward the trail. The area to the north and east of the property was a lake now called Hot Lake which bordered a much larger marshland then covering a substantial portion of the valley. Early facilities included a white-washed wood frame hotel and a row of bath houses equipped with wooden tubs for mud and hot mineral water treatments. These improvements were accomplished despite Clark's demise in 1878. In 1887 the resort was incorporated with Newhart as a major stockholder. In 1900 Newhart sold the enterprise to a Dr. Minthorn, and a newer facility was built by Minthorn and one "Bear" Cook. Shortly thereafter Minthorn sold his interest to a Dr. Tape and invested in a spa at Nye Beach on the Oregon Coast.

Railroad and Political Interests

The exact sequence of subsequent events has so far eluded investigation. However, at some point the following events took place.

The Oregon Railway and Navigation Company interests of Northwest rail tycoon Henry Villard constructed a rail line directly in front of Hot Lake Hotel on Hot Lake ranch land and thence across a six mile lake into La Grande. It was a suspiciously expensive stretch of line and did not follow the logical rail route through the town of Union, then the county seat. The route through Union would have provided a better grade out of the valley and would have bypassed the lake. It is the subject of conjecture that the location of the railroad was tied directly to the O.R. & N. ownership interests in Hot Lake and to a power struggle then going on between railroad interests and town fathers of Union.

Hot Lake Resort was acquired from Tape by the O.R. & N. in partnership with Walter Pierce, state legislator, Governor, and eventual congressman.\* The relationship between the parties and the timing of the relationship is not precisely clear. However, in 1906, after several years of construction, the existing concrete and brick building was completed by the partners. With this development, the importance of the resort began to accelerate rapidly.

Dr. Phy

Not long after the east wing was completed, Walter Pierce succeeded in attracting Surgeon W. T. Phy to act as assistant manager of the facility. Dr. Phy was a native of the region who had been educated in medicine in Kansas City, and had done post-graduate work in the East.

\*Walter M. Pierce (1861-1954) was educated in law at Northwestern University and practiced in Pendleton, Oregon 1892-1902. He had speculated in land in Eastern Oregon before being elected to the statesenate, where he served two 4-year terms (1903-1907, 1917-1921). He was Governor 1923-1927 and congressman from Oregon 1933-1943.



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The third floor of the east wing was a hospital which was finished with a white-tiled operating room and viewing room which are still intact. Numerous pieces of medical equipment remain on the premises.

In 1911, it is reported, the enterprise earned \$178,000, and this was a time when meal prices started at 25¢ and room rates ranged up to \$3.50 per week. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Phy left Hot Lake Sanitorium, reportedly in a dispute with Pierce concerning control of operations.

Dr. Phy was brought back to the facility in 1917 and proceeded to float a \$96,000 renovation bond through Boise Trust Company which was repayed in less than five years. Thus began the period of true international repute for Hot Lake Resort. Phy and the Governor continued their association. The doctor served on the State Board of Health and served as assistant adjutant of the U. S. Army Medical Corps while on leave from Hot Lake.

Guests and patients came to the facility from all over the world. Phy was particularly known for the early use of x-ray as a diagnostic tool and for radiological treatment of cancer. The old medical files still at the facility are fascinating. Hot Lake was known as "The Mayo Clinic of the West" and was soundly recommended as the best in the west by the original Rochester facility.

Hot Lake was also referred to as "The Town Under One Roof". The combined frontage of buildings then exceeded 600 feet, and the facilities could accommodate more than 300 guests. During the year 1924, for example, the resort averaged 125 new guests per day. At large occasions more than 1,000 people were seated in the dining halls. Guests and patients alike came to "take the waters" in the European manner. It was a place of elegance and style which featured potted palms, ferns and a score of canaries in gilded cages. Great hunts were organized from the 1,100-acre ranch which grew to surround the hotel.

The Sanatorium and Hotel contained a 60-bed surgical ward, large lobby, ballroom, poolroom, cafeteria, grill, large kitchens, pantries, solariums, lounging rooms, bath houses, barber shop, confectionary, drug store, news stand, reception rooms, laboratories, x-ray and development rooms and commissary. Behind the sanatorium were covered garages, a show barn, and parking lots which still exist.

The resort was nearly self-sufficient and produced a large proportion of its own vegetables, meats, eggs, and dairy products. Ballet performances, lectures and theatricals were regularly featured in the Hot Lake public rooms. Interestingly, a geothermal hot water heating system was introduced during the new construction of 1905-1906 which still operates and now saves an estimated \$50,000 per year in fuel costs over oil heating costs.

After more than thirty years of immense success, events took place which led

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to the resort's decline. Dr. Phy died in 1932. His son, Mark T. Phy, also a gifted surgeon and administrator, died the following year. The depression hit the region hard. All of the local banks were closed and the facility had more than \$250,000 in unpaid individual accounts on the books when it applied for federal reconstruction funds in 1934. Finally, in 1934, due to the general lack of maintenance and lax administration, most of the wooden portion of the main building and the old hotel were lost to fire.

Later Ownerships

Hot Lake was acquired by A. J. Roth in 1941, and in 1951 it was turned into a home for the aged. Some remodeling was carried out consistent with this use. The building was well maintained by Roth and there were very few structural or exterior changes and none of major scope. The rest home was a financial success.

In 1974, the facility was purchased from Roth by a partnership which provided indifferent management. The rest home which was the only source of income was abruptly closed. Payments were missed, and after several years a restaurant facility was opened without much success. No guest rooms were opened. The pool was closed, and no advertising was done on Interstate Highway 80 or elsewhere.

Present management acquired the facility in November, 1977. Specific restoration and development plans for the property are covered in detail in Item 7.

Summary of Areas of Significance

It is understood that in protohistoric times the native population regarded the sulphur springs of Hot Lake a place of healing and called them "Ea-kesh-pa". Present owners have under consideration a plan to conduct an archeological survey of areas proposed for new construction and to display salvage materials in an interpretive facility to be developed in the blacksmith shop.

It is not known when the toponym "Hot Lake" was first used, but, as far as is known, the first time the steaming mineral lake was seen by white men was in 1812, when Robert Stuart and his Pacific Fur Company companions paused there enroute from Astoria to St. Louis. Washington Irving's Astoria describes the early encounter in the following words: "In traversing this (Grande Ronde) plain, they passed, close to the skirts of the hills, a great pool of water, three hundred Yards in circumference, fed by a sulfur spring about ten feet in diameter, boiling up in the corner. The vapor from this pool was extremely noisome, and tainted the air for a considerable distance. The place was much frequented by elk, which were found in considerable numbers in the adjacent mountains, and their horns, shed in the springtime, were strewed in every direction around the pond."

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For a period of at least twenty years, between 1911 and 1931, Hot Lake Resort was among the finest true spas in the Pacific Northwest. From all indications it had few equals in elegance, accommodations, main line rail access and quality of medical support. It enjoyed the highest reputation among the people who flocked there to take the waters. Touring companies performed there, and recitals were given by local musicians. Dance was performed in the public rooms, and art exhibited in the hallways. It was an oasis of refinement in a valley of impressive scenic beauty.

In its heyday, the resort is said to have employed a staff of between 125 and 175 persons. In the 1920s, W. T. Phy is reported to have had 70 assistants, 250 patients, and up to 300 guests at a given time. By 1924 four daily transcontinental trains stopped at Hot Lake station.

The geothermal closed-loop heating system was regarded something of an engineering break-through when it was installed. The sanatorium is believed to be among the oldest and largest commercial structures in the country to have been heated throughout its history by a geothermal energy source. It was estimated that this system saved \$15,000 per year in 1911. It now saves an estimated \$50,000 per year.

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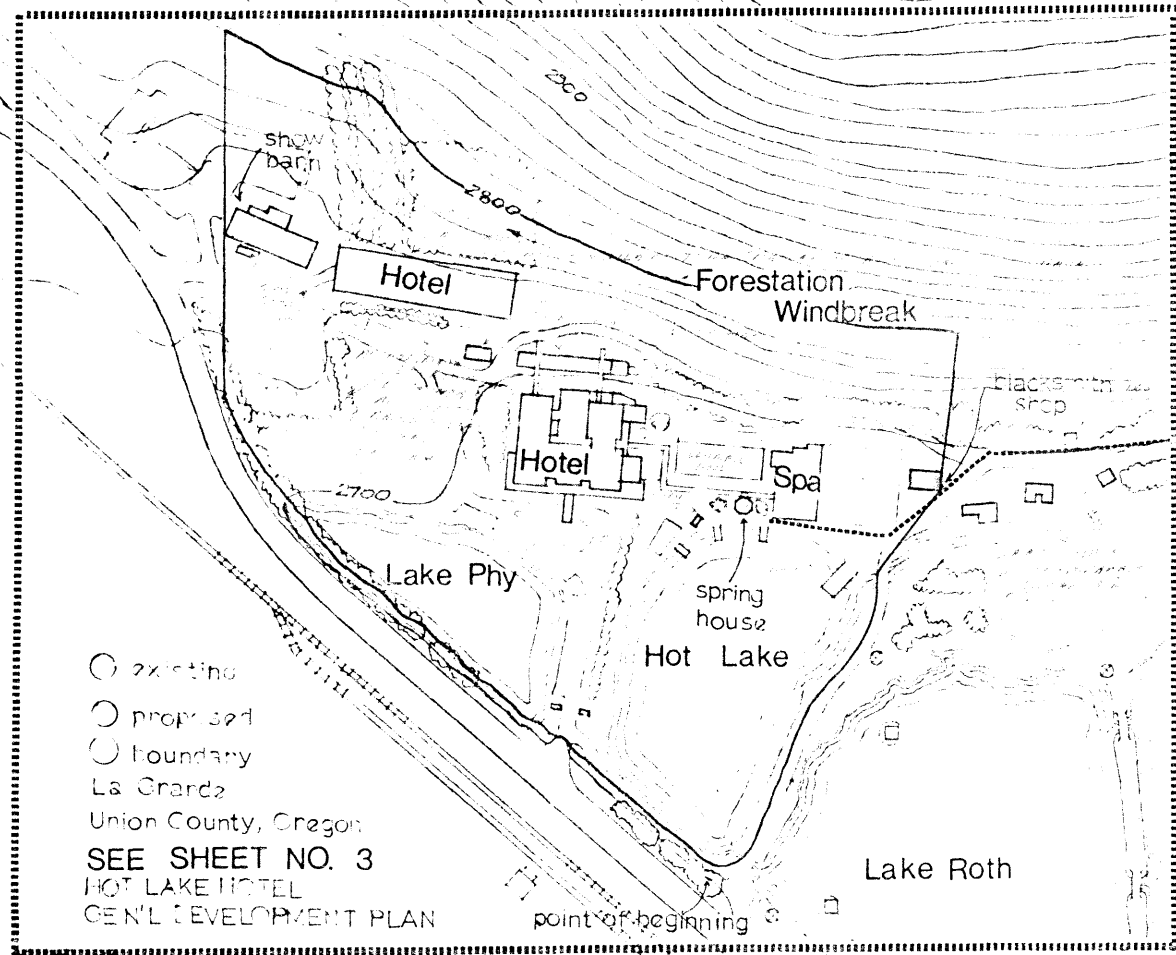
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Commencing at a point at the intersection of the southerly edge of Highway 203 right-of-way and the NW corner of Hot Lake, thence in a southwesterly direction along the westerly edge of Hot Lake at the high water mark to the intersection of the SW corner of Hot Lake and the south side of the mouth of the canal connecting thereto, thence in a straight line to the NW corner of the former blacksmith shop, thence south along a line extending from the west side of the blacksmith shop to the 2800-foot contour line on the hillside behind Hot Lake Resort, thence in a southeasterly direction along said contour line to a point that is directly south of the SE corner of the former show barn, thence directly north to the NE corner of the show barn, thence due north to intersect with the southerly edge of Highway 203, thence in a northwesterly direction along the southerly edge of Highway 203 right-of-way to the point of beginning.

king



- existing
- proposed
- boundary

La Grange  
 Union County, Oregon  
**SEE SHEET NO. 3**  
**HOT LAKE HOTEL**  
**GEN'L DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

200 400



NORTH

Jogging Path

Windmill

Futu

Japanese Waterwheel

Foothill-Ladd Canyon Road

76 Cars

Parking