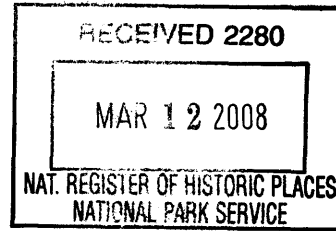


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



337

# 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 Putnam / Neff House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

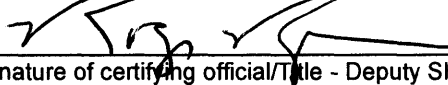
street & number 227 North Berkeley Way  not for publication

city or town Medford  vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Jackson code 029 zip code 97504

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide X locally.

  
Signature of certifying official/Title - Deputy SHPO

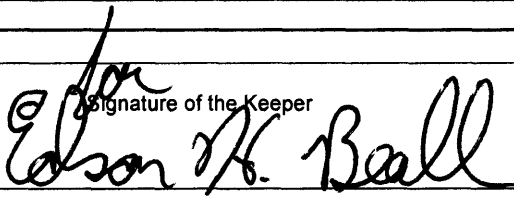
3-12-08  
Date

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):

 Signature of the Keeper  
4.25.08 Date of

Putnam / Neff House  
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR  
County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property  
(check as many as apply)

Category of Property  
(check only one box)

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

- private
- public - local
- public - state
- public - Federal

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

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)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

foundation: CONCRETE  
walls: WOOD: Weatherboard  
roof: WOOD: shake  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Putnam / Neff House  
Name of Property

Jackson Co., 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).

- 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.

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  
COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1911-1947  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1911, estimated date of construction  
1932, sale of building to Porter Neff  
\_\_\_\_\_

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)  
George Putnam and Porter Neff

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Putnam / Neff House  
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 10 512443 4686322  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_

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 Dan L. Teglia

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 1, 2007

street & number 227 North Berkeley Way telephone (541) 227-9227

city or town Medford state OR zip code 97504

## 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 Dan L. Teglia and Jeffrey C. Hanson

street & number 227 North Berkeley Way telephone (541) 227-9227

city or town Medford state OR zip code 97504

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

---

## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### SUMMARY

Built c. 1911 the Putnam / Neff House is a 3,200 square foot, two-story, wood-frame, Craftsman-style home set on a large gently-sloping lot with mature landscaping within Medford's historic Eastside. The cross-gabled building is clad with horizontal wood board and wood shingle, and has a poured concrete foundation. Fenestration is irregular, mixing fixed, one-over-one double-hung, and casement windows. Prominent porches with hipped roofs on the east and west facades are enclosed with multi-light doors and casement windows. The Craftsman-style interior makes use of indigenous woods such as oak hardwood floors and fir sub-floors throughout the building. The porch floors are fir. Built-in cabinets, window seats, and nooks are prominent throughout the building, especially in the living room and kitchen. Most all hardware, cabinets, and bath tubs and sinks throughout the building are original. The small guest cottage and garage located on the north side of the property along Jackson Street echo the architectural style of the main building. An out-of-period basketball court is located on the north side of the building and a modern pool is located on the south side.

### SETTING

The long-established residential neighborhood has many homes of various sizes and ages placed on large well-maintained lots along tree-lined streets. Many homes have views overlooking downtown Medford. The Putnam / Neff House is located on the corner of Jackson Street and Berkeley Way, facing Berkeley, and sits toward the back of a 125 by 125 foot fenced lot. Like the neighboring properties, the landscaping is well-established, including a grand hundred-year-old Atlas cedar in the southwest corner of the property. A large maple tree is in the opposite northwest corner. Overhanging Jackson Street on the north side of the lot is a large stately Catalpa tree. The front of the property is lined with three large Russian elms, which are in front of a six-foot-tall stained-wood craftsman-style fence. An arbor is placed over the entrance gate. The landscaped yard has a large variety of plants and shrubs intermingled with Japanese maples and other fruit and ornamental trees.

The main building is set behind a considerable expanse of lawn that slopes up toward the fence. There is an original brick patio area immediately in front of the house and three brick planters. To the north of the main building is a concrete slab, which is used as a basketball court. A kidney-shaped pool is set to the south side of the building. The pool is surrounded by a concrete patio. A finished garage and attached guest cottage are set in the northern section of the lot. The buildings, pool, basketball court, and entryways are connected to the main house by concrete walks.

### EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Putnam Neff House is a two-story wood-frame building of 3,200 square feet and measures approximately 50 feet across the front and 49 feet across the sides, exempting the projecting second-floor balconies, chimney, and porches. The building has a basement and attic, is set on a concrete foundation, and clad in one-half by six-inch vertical board over most of the exterior. Wood shingle and lattice is used in each of the dormers and the projecting second-story porch uses vertical board. The roof is sheathed in wood shingles with

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   2  

---

projecting eaves between 26 and 36 inches wide around the entire house. The cross-gabled roof exhibits multiple pitches, lending the house's profile an unusual appearance. A medium-pitch gabled roof runs north south along the main axis of the building and is bisected at the north end by a multi-pitched front gable roof that runs east-west. The roofline is decorated with simple bargeboards fashioned from dimensional lumber and knee-bracing on the open gable ends. An external chimney made of bricks laid in common bond is placed in the center of the south façade and pierces the peak of the roof. A similar internal chimney extends from the south roof plane of the east-west gable. Aluminum gutters and downspouts channel water off the roof.

The building exhibits four enclosed porches, both at ground level and on the second floor. On the east side of the building a low-pitch hipped-roof porch extends from the northeast corner of the east-west gable. The space is enclosed by horizontal board and a band of paired casement windows that run along the top half of the space. A ten-light wood door with two concrete steps is set to the southeast corner of the porch. The ceiling of the enclosed area is fir bead board finished with a crown molding; the walls are clad in vertical siding; the floor is made of simple fir; and the porch includes a set of built-in wood cabinets. The entry door is a solid multi-panel door. A second-floor sleeping porch is fully enclosed by the building's volume on the southeast corner of the east-west gable with a band of paired casement windows with simple casings. On the north elevation a shed-roof porch projects from the second story. The structure is enclosed with vertical board and removable single-hung windows with simple surrounds. Decorative knee bracing supports both the porch itself from underneath and the shed roof. On the first story of the west side a second hipped-roof porch is set into the corner created by the intersection of the two gables. Like the porch on the east facade, the entrance is also enclosed with vertical board and bands of fixed-pane windows set in simple wood frames. The porch has a similarly appointed interior to the east porch. The south-facing entry door has twelve lights and is flanked by side lights consisting of ten-panes of glass each. The door is approached by a run of seven wood steps. An uncovered deck is set on the porch and enclosed with a wood railing. There is a twelve-light door leading to the master bedroom on the north side of the deck.

Fenestration is generally irregular and mixes fixed, one-over-one double-hung, and casement windows. All windows are cased with simple dimensional lumber and have projecting sills. Entries into the building are placed on each of the ground-level porches and on the southeast corner of the north-south gable and on the southeast corner of the east-west gable. Each has ten lights set into a wood frame. A below-grade basement entry with a single-light door is centered on the north façade.

At the northeastern section of the property, a 24 by 18 foot guest cottage is connected by a four-foot roofed breezeway to the adjacent 24 by 18 foot two-car garage. Exterior cladding and style for each is similar to the main building. It is not recorded or known exactly when this structure was built and its initial use is unknown. From what can be seen and deduced, it was built in 1930 and has evolved in design, structure and use. The exterior of the guest cottage/garage matches the exterior of the main house and features a shake roof, wood lap siding, and a concrete foundation.

### INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Putnam-Neff house has fourteen rooms, six downstairs and eight upstairs. Downstairs is the entry porch, kitchen, breakfast nook, formal dining room, family room, utility room, and a half bath. Upstairs is the master

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

---

bedroom and attached full bathroom and sleeping porch; a guest bedroom with sleeping porch; a second full bath; an office; and a reading room.

The former main entry, now used as a sun porch, is located on the west side of the building where it opens into the vestibule. Upon entering vestibule, the stairway to the second floor is visible to the southeast side of the space. The vestibule is simply appointed with a dark-stained fir-paneled wainscot and simple surrounds for the entries to the dining room to the north and the living room to the south. The staircase itself rises a half story to a broad landing and turns back on itself to arrive at the second floor. It features a square newel post and balustrade. A hidden storage closet with a paneled door is tucked beneath the stairs.

One of the most ornamental spaces, the large rectangular living room occupies the entire south side of the first floor. The room is flanked with dark-stained fir paneled wainscot. Built-in cabinets with wood-framed glass doors line the entire east wall of the room below the eight wood-framed casement windows. A metal radiator is roughly centered in the wall in a well between the cabinetry. A multi-light exterior door is set in the southeast corner of the room. On the south wall are two firewood boxes / window seats and sets of paired casement windows are located to the right and left of a centered fireplace that is clad in faux cobblestone. The west wall features a centered fixed pane of glass flanked by double-hung windows. A decorative plate rail is permanently attached to the wall to the right of the bank of windows.

The dining room is located in the northwest corner of the building off the vestibule. The space is decorated similarly to the vestibule and living room. A dark-stained baseboard surrounds the room and the hardwood floor has a uniquely-designed inlaid pattern. On the north wall the room has two equally-spaced fir window seats set over metal radiators that are recessed two feet into the wall. Over each radiator is a pair of six-light wood casement windows. A solid-fir paneled-swinging door on the east wall leads to the breakfast nook and continues to the kitchen, and there is a fifteen-light fir door leading into the sun room.

The kitchen is placed in the northeast corner of the building, with the east porch beyond. A utility room and the stairs to the basement are accessed through the kitchen. The utility space has an entry to the south. In the northeast corner there is an entry to a small powder room. The kitchen has built-in butler's cabinets located opposite the breakfast nook and a dumbwaiter cabinet recessed into the wall of the nook, complete with the original door and latch. The utility room off of the kitchen has all original doors and windows, which have been refinished. The storage closet has had hundred-year-old fir shelving added and is now being used as a pantry, but has not been altered in any other way. The powder room has been remodeled to reflect the intended design of the house and still possesses the original window, sink, and fixtures.

On the second floor the stairs lead to a landing with entries to the master bedroom, bathroom, and guest room located on the north end of the building. The area also connects to a hallway leading to the second upstairs bathroom on the east wall, and the office and reading room, which occupy the south end of the floor. All of the inside doors are solid fir and, like the rest of the windows and doors in the house, have been restored to their original finish. Noteworthy interior features on the second level include the original glass-paneled French doors in the master bedroom connecting to the sleeping porch with its casement windows and tongue-and-groove fir ceiling, finished fir floors, and horizontal siding on exposed exterior walls. The master bedroom also has built-in drawers and a cabinet on the north wall and a mirrored closet door and four additional doors. The door leading

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

---

to the outside deck is a fifteen-light fir door. The master bath has built-in wood cabinets, a shower enclosure and bath tub. The guest bathroom is similar, and includes a tub and sink, built-in wood cabinets, and finished fir floors. The guestroom features picture molding trim with a connecting sleeping porch possessing the same attributes as the master bedroom's sleeping porch; however, the windows were replaced with casement sashes.

The basement has two rooms. The smaller room is completely finished with fir paneling and plaster and has canning cupboards. The main room has a wine storage closet, originally used as a pantry, and a concrete, lead-trimmed, two-basin utility sink.

### DATE OF CONSTRUCTION

Conclusively dating the construction of the Putnam / Neff House has been impossible due to an absence of documentation. In addition, the building's unusual proportions and design suggests a later construction date or that the building underwent alterations. However, documentary evidence shows that the Putnam / Neff House was constructed around 1911 and that the building maintains a high degree of integrity. A 1909 warranty deed recording B.F. Whisler's sale of the subject property to George Putnam and his wife for \$2,000 is the earliest record of the property. However, the deed does not specify if a home was included in the sale. In 1911 Putnam's address was listed Gaddis & Dixon city directory as 219 N. Central, suggesting that a house either did not exist or was in the process of construction in 1911.<sup>1</sup> In the 1912 and 1914 city directories, Putnam's address is given as "Highcroft," the name of the subdivision where the building is located, without a number or proper street name. The earliest conclusive evidence that a building existed on the site is a Sanborn Fire Insurance map from 1926. The document clearly shows the building in its current configuration. The building is also listed in the 1935 Medford City directory at 227 Berkeley Way. The best evidence for a circa 1911 construction date is the building's highly intact interior and exterior that utilizes many fixtures and finishes, including trim, doors, hinges, and door knobs, listed in the 1910 *Sears, Roebuck Home Builders Catalog*. See appendixes. This suggests that the Putnam/Neff House has undergone few alterations in its history, and strongly suggests a 1911 construction date. As of this writing, the architect could not be determined.

### ALTERATIONS

Despite the conclusions that might be drawn from its unusual appearance, the Putnam Neff House has undergone few alterations during its use. For instance, the roof profile can give the impression of a later alteration. However, based on the undoubtedly original woodwork from floor-to-ceiling in the upstairs rooms that would have been affected by any such modification, this roof design is apparently original to the house. It is possible that, during design and/or construction, the owner/builder decided to provide more head room in the upstairs rooms, and -- rather than completely redesign the second-story -- found the easiest solution to be this uneven gable.

---

<sup>1</sup> City directories often reflect address information for the previous year due to the time between compiling and printing the document.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   5  

---

Actual changes to the building plan were largely carried out during the historic period. In 1930, the Neff family added square footage to what was the garage at that time, turning it into a guest cottage with full bath. The currently existing two-car garage was also built at that time. The Neff family fully enclosed the already 3/4 enclosed front porch and added a screened-in porch with detachable windows off of the kitchen in the same year. The original proportions remain the same. Despite the change, it is readily apparent that the porches were always intended to be semi-enclosed spaces, thus the alteration maintains the original intent.

Perhaps the greatest change is the orientation of the building. The original site was significantly larger, with the west side of the property extending west down to Hill House Street and south toward Crown Avenue. The current sunroom on the west side of the building originally served as the main entrance. Division of the property in 1960 resulted in the loss of the western portion of the original lot; however, it appears as if the entry orientation had already changed by this time. The exact dates the orientation of the house changed is not known, but the available information strongly indicates it occurred during Porter Neff's residency in the 1930-1940s. In the late 1990's, the Hagert family added a partition in the back bedroom to create two smaller bedrooms, now being used as reading room and office, and a new shake roof. The family also redesigned the fireplace and covered it in Faux cobblestone. Recent changes have been limited to the restoration of the original building and beautification of the landscape. A six-foot-high wood fence was installed in the late 1990's along the north and south perimeters, and in 2004, a wood fence with an arbor and formal gates was built to replace a rusted metal fence. A fence was built at that time as well on the western portion of the property to match the existing fence on the north and south sides completing the enclosure of the entire property. In 2004, windows on the screen porch off the kitchen and to the sleeping porch off the guest bedroom were replaced. The rooms remain consistent with the original character and design of the house and have added year-round useable living space. The detached garage and guest cottage interiors were fully renovated in 2006. The four walls of the garage have been dry-walled and painted with the cement floor and ceiling remaining as they were. The interior of the cottage has been updated, leaving the original walls and exterior fully intact. Other additions to the property include a pool and basket-ball court.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   1  

---

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### SUMMARY

The Putnam / Neff House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B for its association with newspaperman George Putnam and attorney Porter Neff. Putnam was an influential political force in the local community and state, one who weighed in on a number of important issues ranging from public safety to social justice. Putnam owned the property from 1910 to 1932, but likely sold or rented it to local lawyer, real-estate developer, and community activist Porter Neff soon after he left Medford for Salem in 1919. Already established as an influential attorney for the city, Neff shaped his community both through his business dealings that led to the construction of many fine buildings and as a leader of the local legal establishment.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDFORD

20 December 1883 marked the beginnings of Medford when the south-heading Oregon-California Railroad reached the present Medford town site. Four years later, in 1887, the transportation link between Portland, Oregon, and San Francisco, California was completed. Medford's central location in the Rogue River Valley along with its proximity to the railroad gave impetus to the town's future establishment as a major distribution point and shipping center for the region.

Medford initially prospered as a shipping point for mines in northern California. The Blue Ledge Mining Company was organized in 1898 following the discovery of copper/zinc deposits by prospectors from Crescent City, California who were panning on Joe Creek in the upper Applegate River drainage. At its peak of production between 1906 and 1909, the Blue Ledge Mine consisted of twenty-six patented copper and zinc mining claims with a combined area of 487 acres. The mine was in the Elliott mining district of northern Siskiyou County, California, within the Applegate River drainage, three miles south of the Oregon-California state line. Medford, the nearest railroad shipping point, was only thirty-nine miles to the north. As the only rail point in the region, the city prospered in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Although mining was Medford's main industry in the late-nineteenth century, city boosters sought to expand their community's economic base. In 1899, the railroad, in hopes of promoting more land sales and travel to the region, brought 450 newspaper editors to the valley on an excursion train. The reporters were impressed with what they saw and wrote many glowing reports of the "new Eden." With the support of the Southern Pacific Company's Sunset Magazine, the well-healed Commercial Club of Medford mounted an active promotion campaign. Slick artistic publications spoke of Medford and the Rogue River Valley's location, resources, and potential in glowing terms:

Located in the very heart and center of this beautiful valley is the City of Medford. The men who selected the original town site chose wisely, for here every natural condition favors the building of a great city. Because of its central position and being located on the main railroad in the southern half of Oregon, all the immense agricultural, horticultural, timbered and mining wealth within a radius of 100 miles is tributary to Medford. Here the treasure streams empty and must always empty. This is why Medford

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

---

is one of the most metropolitan, most flourishing and busiest little cities in all the bustling west. It is not only a city of today, but a city of tomorrow.

The promotional campaign was successful, and Medford's population of 1,791 in 1900 boomed to 8,840 by 1910. Many newcomers were attracted by the Rogue River Valley's temperate climate and productive soils, which led to the growth of agriculture in the area. By 1900 farming was bringing in more money than mining. The east side of Bear Creek proved to be good for growing wheat, almonds, cherries, sugar beets, and pears. Tree fruits were an especially profitable and fast-growing industry that came to dominate the local economy. The "pear-orchard boom" of the early-twentieth century made Medford a very prosperous town as a substantial acreage of fertile bottom lands, as well as marginal hillsides were planted. As the wealth and size of the area grew, so did its needs. Growth was so rapid in spring 1910 that the area around Medford was described as "crowded." The *Medford Mail Tribune* reported that "...the new residents are arriving in such numbers there are not enough accommodations. A tent city of fifty tents is being put up for housing."

Throughout the early-twentieth century, Medford added new public buildings and housing plats to accommodate its growing population. In 1905, Medford's first hospital, the Southern Oregon Hospital, opened in a house on the corner of South Central Avenue and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Only a few years later the cornerstone was laid on a much larger hospital in July 1911. On 12 February 1912 the hospital was dedicated. To accommodate the growing number of residents, a new twelve-block suburban residential addition was surveyed and recorded in January 1908 with the Jackson County Recorder's Office. It was the first of three new residential areas to climb up the "Incline" of the oak- and grass-covered hills above lower eastside Medford. The "incline," a gradual-to-steep topographical break between the broad level floodplain along Bear Creek on the lower eastside and the rolling hills of upper Eastside, provided prime building sites from 1910 to 1930.

The Queen Anne Addition, along with the additions of Siskiyou Heights, Medford Heights, and Nob Hill, instigated and influenced the Eastside's physical, economic, and social character into the community's second century. Between 1908 and 1912, out of all the new developments, the Queen Anne and the Siskiyou Heights additions were the prime contenders for Medford's elite. During 1910 both advertised heavily in local newspapers, adopted slogans, and jockeyed to be the town's first-class "upper crust" area. Construction increased as the Eastside experienced dramatic growth between the two world wars. The rolling hill country of the upper Eastside, from crest of the "Incline" to the Rogue River Valley Country Club, was first laid out during the 1920s. A few of the historic buildings still exist along Crater Lake Avenue and most of the homes designed by Medford's first registered and most renowned architect, Frank C. Clark, exist along Geneva and Minnesota streets and can be found for a number of blocks along East Main Street, Berkeley Way, Crown Avenue and Hillcrest Avenue, all running off East Main. Throughout the years, the homes in this area have been recognized as some of the most noteworthy in Medford.

The development of city services mirrored residential construction. In 1909 a new high school was completed on the corner of North Bartlett and 5th Streets. The doors of Medford High School had hardly opened before discussions about the need for another school house began. The school board's decision to locate a new school building east of Bear Creek signaled a trend in the growth and development of Medford's eastside. The prospect of a new school in this area also greatly increased the potential residential value of the new Queen

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

---

Anne Addition. Classes first met in fall 1911 in Roosevelt School, which, because of its location in what was fast becoming a prestigious section of the city, was referred to as "Roosevelt Academy."<sup>1</sup>

To meet the needs of the eastside neighborhoods the city undertook an extensive paving campaign in the 1909-1912 period. Funded by local property owner assessments, streets, water and sewer were the initial step in the many Eastside residential developments during this period. Following the dedication of right-of-way to the city for roads, the various individuals involved with developing that area petitioned the Medford City Council to pave and improve the Geneva-Minnesota area, with continuation of those improvements to Crater Lake Avenue, East Main Street, and other contiguous streets. The Putnam / Neff House at 227 N. Berkeley Way is exactly seven blocks east of the intersection of Minnesota Streets and Crater Lake Ave., and just two blocks north of East Main Street. The rising need for water also became an issue during this period as the city sought new sources for its thirsty population.

### NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSE HISTORY

Early Medford did not include what is now known as "East Medford." The city limit stopped at Bear Creek. In 1858, 320 acres of the area east of the creek were settled by Rezin and Eutha Packard, who were given Donation Land Grant status for the land in 1865. By 1888 enough people had settled east of Bear Creek to warrant the building of a bridge at the present-day Main Street, then called 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Before the bridge, Wagon traffic used the ford from the new town to the evolving system of county roads that would become East Main Street, Crater Lake Avenue, Hillcrest Road, and North Phoenix Road. The wagon bridge that was built was washed away during the winter floods of February, 1890. The bridge was rebuilt by the county the following summer and replaced with a steel bridge in 1902. In 1912 the bridge was relocated downstream to Jackson Street and replaced with the current reinforced-concrete bridge. The improvements of the Main Street crossing corresponded to the physical development and needs of the Eastside. In the early 1890s, the area, officially known as Eastwood, was incorporated. In 1899, Medford officially annexed the east side of Bear Creek. By 1901 there were 130 residents residing in East Medford.

As Medford boomed in the early-twentieth century, so did the eastside of town, which increasingly became home to many of the city's wealthy and influential residents as new homes were built on the "Incline." Prominent local architect Frank Clark Chamberlain is the attributed architect of many beautiful homes in the area built during the 1910s and 1920s within a four block area, bound by Jackson Street on the north, Main Street on the south, Berkeley Way on the west and Sunrise Avenue on the east.

The Putnam / Neff house was constructed during the development of Medford's east side, which was spurred by dramatic growth in the community's physical size, services, and economy. The first owner of record of the Putnam / Neff House property is B.F. Whisler in 1909. His association with the property is unknown, but it is assumed that he built, or had the building built, in 1911 during the height of the orchard boom before selling to Putnam. According to Jackson County records, the house was the first building to be constructed and the only one to sit on this tract of land for many years until other well-appointed homes were constructed in the 1920s. It

---

<sup>1</sup> At the time of this writing, due to the estimated costs of retrofitting the building for seismic safety, the school board has called for the school's closure and possible sale of the building, it is currently the oldest functioning school building in the district.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

---

typifies the style and character of the larger buildings of Medford's wealthier residents constructed in the Rogue Valley during this time, and the building's large size and fine craftsmanship foreshadows the area's rise as a wealthy neighborhood. Prominent and successful, both newspaperman George Putnam and attorney Porter Neff chose to live in this up-scale area, reflecting their relative wealth and community status.

### GEORGE PUTNAM, NEWSPAPERMAN

George Putnam, was born in New Orleans in 1873 and was the son of Oramel Hinckley Putnam and Mary Gibson Putnam. Raised in Omaha, Nebraska, in the early 1890s he was a student at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. In his sophomore year at the university he started a monthly student publication called *The Nebraskan*, which later became the university's *Daily Nebraskan*. For some years after leaving college, where he also studied civil engineering, young Putnam worked as a construction engineer for the San Diego Water and Flume Company. During the winters he worked at the *San Diego Tribune*, where he attracted the attention of the "journalistic wizard," E. W. Scripps. In 1899 he became private secretary to Mr. Scripps, founder of United Press and whose newspaper chain would later become an important part of the Scripps-Howard "empire." After this experience, Scripps made Putnam coast manager of the Scripps-McRae Press Association, a position he held for two years. In 1902 he founded the *Spokane Press* for Scripps and returned to California in 1904 to edit the *Eureka Herald*. Following this meteoric rise, Putnam's Oregon saga began a couple of years later in Portland, where he started out as news editor of the *Oregon Journal*.

Desiring to strike out on his own, in 1907 he purchased and consolidated the *Medford Tribune* and *Jacksonville Times* and acquired the *Medford Mail* in 1910 to create the *Medford Mail Tribune*, which is still published under that name. With the *Mail Tribune* as his Oregon beginning, he went on to earn "a niche high up in the temple of Oregon journalistic fame as one of the state's most forceful and fiery editors." Throughout his tenure in Medford Putnam's editorials attacked social injustice, and as a result, he made a number of powerful enemies as well as many friends and admirers. Often times his columns affected the outcome of important local events.

One of the first issues he dealt with in his editorials was the quality of the drinking water in Medford. Since the late-nineteenth century Medford sought new sources of clean drinking water for its growing population, but by the early-twentieth century had failed to meet the city's needs. Putnam took note of this problem, and In December 1907, his editorial stated that "the water from Bear Creek is so muddy it is clogging the meters, prompting the inquiry, 'Was there any water ever made dirtier than that now being pumped in the city mains?'" His editorial concluded with the statement that "it is a serious question whether to sell such stuff as water is not a violation of the pure food law, as well as obtaining money under false pretenses." Putnam strongly advocated that the city obtain the water rights for Big Butte Springs; however the city instead choose to construct a twenty-mile wooden-stave pipeline from Fish Lake in the Cascade Mountains to Medford. Public opinion and editorials by George Putnam in the *Medford Daily Tribune* were critical of the hastily made recommendation; however, the project went forward as planned. In less than ten years a new source was needed, and by 1927 the City of Medford had indeed secured sole rights to Big Butte Springs, as Putnam had urged. These springs continue to serve the city today.

Already well-known and established in the community after the water fight, it was about 1910 that Putnam purchased his property from B.F. Whisler in Medford's up-and-coming Eastside. According to Mr. Turnbull's

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

---

annals from 1962, Mr. Putnam's career "entered its most spectacular phase" at this time. At that time he had witnessed an altercation between Mr. W. S. Barnum, president of the Rogue River Valley Railroad Co., Mr. Oswald West, a member of the State Railroad Commission (who was to become Oregon's Governor in 1911), and Medford Mayor J. F. (Doc) Reddy. West had gone to Medford to make certain that Barnum was obeying the Commission's order to provide a brick or stone depot at either end of the 5 ½ mile long railroad that he operated. While West, Barnum, and Mayor Reddy were talking things over on downtown Medford's Main Street, Barnum became angry, picked up an axe from the locomotive, and chased after Dr. Reddy. After Reddy had already repulsed the attack of one of Barnum's sons. Fleeter of foot, the mayor outran Barnum when the enraged railroad owner threw the axe at Reddy, narrowly missing his head.

Putnam had witnessed the fracas, and after a grand jury had refused to indict Barnum on an assault charge, the *Mail-Tribune* editor proceeded to accuse the grand jury and prosecuting attorney of white washing Barnum. Putnam was the only eyewitness called before the grand jury to testify. Six or more witnesses, who were nowhere near the scene, testified they hadn't seen Barnum throw the axe, so their testimony prevailed over Putnam's. For speaking his peace about the proceedings, Putnam was indicted by the grand jury for libel, and a bench warrant was issued for his arrest. Near midnight on December 21, as Putnam was speeding north for the Christmas holidays, he was pulled from his berth in a Pullman sleeper at Roseburg, denied communication with friends, and thrown into the "pestilential" Douglas County jail to remain until noon of the next day. Following his incarceration, Putnam exposed the conditions of the Douglas County jail, which later resulted in it being declared unfit for habitation.

Putnam was returned to Jacksonville, tried, and found guilty -- not because of a prejudiced jury, it seems, but because Circuit Judge Hanna refused to admit any testimony upholding the truth of Putnam's editorial statements, ruling that the grand jury had already disposed of the axe affair, and that its decision was unassailable and therefore not open to review. One of the witnesses for Putnam was railroad commissioner (later Governor), Oswald West. Putnam was fined \$150.00 with an alternate 75-day jail sentence. He appealed, and the verdict was reversed by the Oregon State Supreme Court; it ordered that Jackson County reimburse Putnam for all his expenses incidental to the trial. This was a complete vindication of Putnam's conduct as editor. Being the ever-responsible editor, he had the story in his own paper covered colorlessly, with all subjective description studiously avoided.

The case attracted state-wide attention; it seemed that most people were on Putnam's side in the Medford affair. Even the Governor at the time, George Chamberlain, offered him a pardon after his conviction. Putnam declined to accept a pardon, preferring to meet the issue head-on, which had always been his approach to the problems of an editor. Putnam wanted to "fight to the finish," and he won doing just that. According to admirers, Putnam won not only a victory for himself; he won for the principle of freedom of speech and the press in Oregon. The Governor confirmed his opinion of the Medford editor by appointing him as a member of a State Highway Commission on 7 February 1909, before the Supreme Court had acted on his appeal.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> George Turnbull, *On Oregon Crusader* (Portland, Binford & Mort, 1955), 38. No archival evidence has been found to substantiate Turnbull's claim that Putnam served on the State Highway Commission.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

---

During all of this, George Putnam received many expressions of support from the press and the public, but none of these was more appreciated by the Medford editor than his vindication in the Jackson County election of 1908. Every man endorsed for county office by his paper, the *Medford Tribune*, was elected. The *Oregon Journal's* interpretation of the election read:

“There is that in the ordinary American citizen that makes him resent an attack upon his rights or the rights of fellow citizens. And it was in that spirit that inspired the voters of Jackson County last Monday and resulted in the breaking up of the ‘courthouse ring’ that has ruled things in Medford from a time that memory of man runneth not to the contrary. It took a man of intelligence, courage and skill to insert the first wedge in the Republican ring of Medford. George Putnam, editor of the *Mail Tribune*, proved himself that man.”

The Medford editor's fellow newspapermen also expressed their confidence in him in other ways. At the largest meeting of the Oregon Press Association theretofore held, the members, in session in Portland 17-18 January 1908, honored Mr. Putnam by electing him vice president of the organization. As long as he remained in Medford, about eleven more years from the date of his trial, he continued to criticize “establishment figures” freely whenever he thought public interest demanded. Things quieted down for George Putnam in Medford after the Barnum clash, and when he made the business arrangement which took him to Salem and away from Medford, he expressed his regret at the severing of the ties that had bound him to the southern Oregon city. His closing editorial, published in the *Tribune* 1 April 1919, follows:

### A FAREWELL WORD

With emotions tinged with regret I announce my retirement as president of the Medford Printing Company and editor of the *Mail Tribune*, having sold my interest to my associates, Messrs. Robert W. Ruhl and S. Sumpter Smith of the *Medford Sun*.

For eleven and a half years it has been my pleasant task to daily tell the current story of the Rogue River Valley and record the events of the world and to have been throughout this period a vital factor in community development.

During all these years, in which prosperity and adversity have been intertwined, years of boom, years of slump and years of recuperation, years of plenty and years of drouth, the *Mail Tribune* has been aggressively on the firing line for progress – social, industrial and political – or endeavored to be. An indulgent public has apparently become convinced of my sincerity – for I have not been jailed or assaulted for a long time. Its toleration in patiently listening to my daily comment on every subject under the sun has earned it a respite – or, some would say, a surcease of evil. For the cooperation and support extended for the making of a newspaper, I wish them all a prosperity as abiding as this most delightful of regions merits.

After his move to Salem in 1919 Putnam continued writing his fiery editorials. In 1922, a state election year, Putnam took a strong stand against the rising political power of the Klu Klux Klan. The new Klan was not a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

---

continuation of the original Ku Klux Klan of post-Civil War Reconstruction in the American South. The new Klan was nationwide in scope, and added religious bigotry to race prejudice. Putnam's *Capital Journal*, in its editor's usual direct style, made it quite clear where it stood on the menace. In an editorial published 9 February 1922 the paper warned the people of Oregon of the menace emerging in their midst. A portion of the editorial reads, "Such fanatical organizations [the Klu Klux Klan] are unpatriotic to a degree and un-American. They are a recrudescence of the medieval intolerance which devastated Europe by civil war and deluged the land with the best blood of the people. Their revival in the twentieth century in free America is an anachronism and a menace to democracy."

The clan responded to Putnam's editorials by calling for a boycott of the paper. Teams of Klansmen were sent into the community to intimidate businessmen into taking their advertising out of the paper and subscribers to cancel their subscriptions. Undaunted, Mr. Putnam called a meeting of Salem businessmen where he declared that he had always been a loyal supporter of Salem merchants and industries. Putnam also pointed out that his newspaper had always refused to carry competitive advertising from Portland. He told them of his large investment in the *Capital Journal* and reminded them of their assurances of sufficient advertising to continue its publication. Portland, he told the group, wanted Salem business and would probably get it if Salem merchants, because of racial and religious intolerance, should refuse to patronize the local newspaper that stood for a free press and tolerance. The Salem merchants voted to ignore the Klan boycott and continued support of the *Capital Journal*.

During July 1922, Putnam's *Capital Journal* serially published "The Modern Ku Klux Klan," a book by Henry P. Fry a former officer of the order. Fry was the author of the New York *World's* exposé of the Klan that brought on a congressional investigation into the organization and won the *World* the Pulitzer Prize. The *Capital Journal*, basing its conclusions on this book as well as on its own observations of the activity of the Klan, explained the aims, purposes, machinery and activities of the order in some of its editorials soon after the book came out. Throughout the fight, Putnam continued to own the house of N. Berkeley Way in Medford and kept-up his connections in his former home town. His continuing close association with Robert Ruhl, now the editor and owner of the *Mail Tribune*, may well have included periodic visits to Medford by Putnam. Ruhl, too, became an outspoken crusader against the Klan and also faced threats of boycott and even of violence. Although not documented in any known existing correspondence or other records, it is highly likely that Putnam and Ruhl would have cooperated with and supported each other throughout the Klan battle, and that Putnam likely exerted some influence on how the *Mail Tribune* faced the KKK in southern Oregon. Ruhl and Putnam ultimately prevailed in his all-out fight to keep the Ku Klux Klan from taking over Oregon's state government in the early 1920's.

George Putnam's third major crusade was against the lawless forces controlling some of the Oregon labor unions. The Salem *Capital Journal's* outspoken editor was, consistently critical of the frequently inconsiderate attitude of organized labor toward the rest of society. He thought that strikes, picketing, and boycotts were weapons that were used not only against the employers, at whom they were basically directed, but against the general public, which generally suffers in proportion to the size of the strike and the extent to which the various weapons are employed. Mr. Putnam waged a campaign only when lawlessness made the situation doubly serious to the public welfare. Obviously he wasn't the only Oregon editor who addressed the subject of labor



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   8  

---

relations; but he was a leader, probably *the* leader, in the period of the late thirties when it came to promoting control, by the authorities, of the “goons and racketeers” who had dominated some of the labor organizations.

Over a period of a full half century in Oregon journalism, Putnam wrote editorials, almost daily, accumulating more than 15,000 columns, approximately 15,000,000 words of editorial matter in 40,000 editorials, equivalent to nearly 200 volumes of books of 250 pages each that dealt with every important phase of human activity. Because of his tireless fight against injustice, Putnam was well respected and known by many Oregonians during his life. In the Foreword to George Turnbull's book, *An Oregon Crusader*, Oswald West, Governor of Oregon from 1911-1915 wrote:

“When I think of George Putnam I am reminded of a prologue written by old Ben Johnson: ‘With and armed and resolute hand, I’ll strip the ragged follies of the time naked as at their birth and, with whip of steel print wounding lashes in their iron ribs. I fear no mood stamp in a private brow when I am pleased t’ unmask a public vice. I fear no strumpet’s drugs nor ruffian’s stab should I detect their hateful practices.’ We both looked upon life as an uncertain game, with the percentage, as usual, warming the hands of the dealer. He knew we lived in a world that deified success and, too often, condoned every means of achieving it; that men were slow to see wickedness in anything that put money in their purses; that conventions are customs which are more preached than practiced – they are duties which we require of our neighbors; that life could be beautiful did not we insist upon making a mess of it. Putnam knew that in this crazy world much truth and beauty are to be found, and that he who admired the stars and the flowers would find God in his heart and see Him in his neighbor’s face; that no one could claim to be a Christian who was tainted with religious bigotry and intolerance. He knew that the masses rarely look beneath the surface; thus they see only the obvious, the superficial – and vote accordingly; and by keeping these things in mind one should never be surprised at anything that happens. ‘Blessed,’ said Carlyle, ‘is the man who has found his work’. George Putnam found it. He believed, with Harvey S. Scott, that struggle is the law of growth; that character is built in the storm and stress of the world; and that man reaches his full height only through responsibility and hardship.”

Later in his life, in recognition of Mr. Putnam’s service to Oregon journalism and to the people of Oregon, in 1945 Willamette University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature. The presentation was made at the University’s commencement exercises by Dr. G. Herbert Smith, President of Willamette. Probably the most fulsome praise of George Putnam by a colleague in Oregon are in the pages of *An Oregon Editor’s Battle for Freedom of the Press* and *An Oregon Crusader*, by George Turnbull, former dean and instructor in the University of Oregon school of journalism, and for a time, editor of the editorial page of the *Democratic-Herald*. The books contain a detailed account of the events through which Mr. Putnam gained recognition as one of “Oregon’s top editors of all time.”

Placed in the historical context of early twentieth-century American journalism and politics, George Putnam is clearly representative of the “muckraking” and crusading newspaper editors of America’s Progressive Era. Taking up battle against “the vested interests” and for “the public’s right to know,” relatively small-town newspapers editors –exemplified nationally by Kansas editor William Allen White -- were crucial leaders of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   9  

---

Progressive civic improvement and reform at the community level. As an Oregonian, Putnam earned an important place in their ranks. Whether agitating for the investment to ensure higher-quality water supply (and thus city growth) or against the nativism and small-mindedness of organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, Putnam can be seen as an important positive example of the "power of the press", as an agent of local change during the Progressive Era.

### PORTER J. NEFF, ATTORNEY

Putnam left Medford in 1919 but retained ownership of the house at 227 N. Berkeley Way until it was sold to Porter J. Neff in 1932 for a dollar, indicating that the two had previously worked out an undisclosed sale. There are no records to clarify who resided in the building from 1919-32, but educated speculation suggests that Putnam, perhaps not knowing for sure whether his Salem enterprise would work out, rented the home to Neff at some point during that time, and then sold it to him in 1932. It is also possible that Neff purchased the building earlier, but that the title was not transferred until 1932. Neff's only other listed residential address in the Medford directory is the Hotel Holland, in 1921, strongly suggesting that he did indeed live in the building.

Porter J. Neff was a resident of Oregon for fifty-one years, the last twenty-eight of which, including his final days, he spent in Medford at 227 N. Berkeley Way.<sup>3</sup> Porter Neff was born 13 September 1871 in Bushnell Illinois, and graduated from the University of Minnesota. He came to Oregon in 1908, and the following year was appointed city attorney for Medford. Mr. Neff was the senior partner in the law firm of Neff, Frohnmayer, and Lowry, which Neff founded in 1910. He was very prominent in Oregon legal circles for many years, was involved in several business concerns in the Medford area, and was a charter member of Medford's renowned University Club. This was the first such club outside of Portland and Seattle, and its "Ivy League" and other college-alumni membership was an indication of the "elite" social status of the many "orchard-boom" arrivals to Jackson County from the Midwest. For many years, the University Club rooms were on the second floor of the *Mail Tribune* Building, built by Porter Neff in 1910-11. In addition, what is now 101 Central Avenue, in downtown Medford, is a building still known by its historic name as the Cooley-Neff Building. This two-story concrete building completed in 1925 is one of the many building projects undertaken in 1925 by the partnership of J.H. Cooley, owner of the Medford Lumber Company, and Porter Neff. Mr. Cooley and Mr. Neff enjoyed a long and fruitful real-estate partnership prior to World War II. Together they developed a number of projects, notably the Mason-Erhman Warehouse, which is still standing at the SE corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Fir Streets at 340 Fir Street; and the Craterian Theater, also known as the Cooley Building. Neff's law firm occupied the upstairs of the Cooley Building. The pair also constructed the Economy Grocerteria Bldg at 106 North Central, which was torn down in the late 1940's to put in a J.C. Penny's department store building.

In addition to his law-practice and real-estate activities, Neff was also a very well-respected community voice. Neff was a regular contributing writer to the *Mail Tribune* for many years, and he won local fame as a speaker and "local dignitary." Neff frequently was touted as the featured speaker at public functions. One of his most notable speeches was at the dedication of Newell Barber Field, Medford's original airport (and the first in the state of Oregon) on Labor Day, 6 September 1920. An Episcopalian, Porter Neff established the Articles of Incorporation for St. Mark's Episcopal Church in 1926, after the church gained parish status. He was also

---

<sup>3</sup> If Neff rented the Berkeley house from Putnam, as suspected, then it was actually the last 40 years.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   10  

---

responsible for organizing several of the irrigation companies and districts in the Rogue Valley and apportioning the water rights between them, a position of immense importance to local orchardists, farmers, and ranchers. A "New Deal Democrat," in 1934 he was appointed chairman of the Medford Ball, a celebration commemorating President Roosevelt's 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Porter Neff's Wife, Isabel Mealy Neff, had significant distinction in her own right. She was described as "one of Medford's best known and most active civic and cultural leaders." During World War II, Neff's association with lumberman Cooley led to his direct involvement with the Forest service in promoting the development of several large sales of National Forest timber to the log-hungry sawmills of Medford and Central Point. The "Porter Neff Timber Sale," one of the biggest of these "emergency war-time" truck- (as opposed to the older railroad-) logging operations, involved the harvest of sugar pine, ponderosa pine, and Douglas-fir from the Rogue River National Forest north of Prospect. This and other such war-time sales contributed directly to Medford's postwar logging-and-milling boom of the 1940s-50s – a phenomenon that steadily evolved into southwestern Oregon's famously timber-dependent economy of the 1960s-80s.

Otto Frohnmayer joined Mr. Neff's law firm in 1933 as an associate, and became one of the Neff firm's three partners. To fully understand his relationship to Porter Neff it would be best to quote Mr. Frohnmayer himself:

"I graduated from law school at the top of my class in 1933 and came down to clerk in the Medford Hotel and then began to realize who the lawyers were here and I'd never met Mr. Neff, but I knew of him as being a very fine lawyer and that is how I eventually came to Medford. Judge Skipworth, who was then the Circuit Judge in Lane County, wrote a letter for me....a recommendation to Porter Neff. Judge Skipworth knew Neff because Neff had tried some of these Bank's-Fehl cases regarding the Good Government Congress thing. He wrote a very complementary letter for me and I brought it down and showed it to Mr. Neff and he said, 'Well, business is awfully bad but if I would be willing to work for forty dollars a month, he would hire me. So that is when I came to Medford. The best thing that ever happened to me....He was probably one of the finest lawyers I ever knew... And sharp... really sharp. We had a very good relationship. I came in 1933 and he was quite active in the practice until about 1956 or 1957.'" (cite source)

The "Good Government Congress thing" referred to above was a political insurgency of the early Depression years in southern Oregon, fanned by the economic stress of many local residents, and established/led by demagogic newspaper owners L. A. Banks and Earl Fehl. It involved bitter recalls, stolen election ballots, threatened and actual violence by G.G.C. movement members against figures of the local political and legal establishment; Robert Ruhl's editorial fight against the G.G.C.'s temporary "take-over" of county government led to the *Mail Tribune* winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1934.

Porter J. Neff, although of undeniable significance to the twentieth-century development of the Rogue Valley, was actually somewhat understated in personal demeanor and in his public life. His political and social influence was strong, yet was apparently also often exerted somewhat "behind the scenes" Neff can then perhaps be seen as typifying the kind of solid, civic-minded, influential community leaders that helped "build" many Oregon cities, the kind whose names, although not forgotten, are not necessarily publicly commemorated by current-day city parks, schools, or other institutions that they helped to found.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

---

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Influential newspaperman George Putnam and attorney and community leader Porter Neff are important figures in the growth and development of Medford. However, despite their many contributions to the community, there are few places remaining in Medford that mark their lives. The offices of the *Mail Tribune* where Putnam served as editor in Medford were demolished and no other building associated with his paper remains. Likewise, Porter Neff's law offices in the Neff-Cooley Theater building were demolished and rebuilt as the Ginger Rogers Craterian Theater. The Craterian Theater went through a complete renovation in the 1990s and the only visible connection to the original building is the embossed lettering over the side entrance reading "1924 Cooley Theater Building." Other buildings constructed by Cooley and Neff have been demolished. However, the National-Register listed Cooley Neff Warehouse built in 1925 still stands at 101 Central Avenue. Despite its association with Neff, the utilitarian warehouse does not speak to the full range of activities that Neff took part in. The building's weak connection with Neff is acknowledged by the fact that the building is listed under Criterion C, and not Neff's involvement in the building's construction.

The residence at 227 North Berkeley Way is the only building in Medford associated with George Putnam and Porter Neff that retains enough physical integrity to qualify for the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the house is the only extant property in Oregon directly associated with Putnam after his press and residence in Salem were demolished.

### CONCLUSION

The Putnam / Neff House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B for its association with influential Medford residents George Putnam and Porter Neff. As editor of the *Mail Tribune*, Putnam influenced many of the important issues of the day including Medford's water supply and justice in the legal system. After he left Medford, he continued to be influential as he actively fought against the Klu Klux Klan. As an influential attorney, developer, and local activist, Neff influenced many aspects of Medford's growth as he physically built the town and established community organizations.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   1  

---

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baca, Elmo, *Romance of the Mission*, Gibbs Smith Publisher, Layton, Utah.

Cathers, David and Vertikoff, Alexander, *Stickley Style – Arts and Crafts Homes in the Craftsman Tradition*, An Archetype Press Book, Simon & Schuster.

Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Jackson County, 100 South Oakdale, Medford, OR.

Ewald, Chase Reynolds, *Arts and Crafts Style and Spirit*, Gibbs Smith, Publisher, Layton, Utah.

Jackson County Clerk's Office, 10 South Oakdale Avenue, Medford, Oregon.

Jackson County Surveyor, 10 South Oakdale Avenue, Medford, Oregon.

Mail Tribune, 111 North Fir Street, Medford, Oregon.

Mayer, Barbara, *In the Arts & Crafts Style*, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, California.

The Medford Sun, Newspaper abstracts Jan., 7, 1923 – Dec., 27, 1925.

Southern Oregon Historical Society, 106 North Central Avenue, Medford, Oregon.

Turnbull, George, *An Oregon Editor's Battle for Freedom of the Press*, Binford & Mort, Portland, Oregon.

\_\_\_\_\_, *An Oregon Crusader*, 1955, Binford & Mort, Portland, Oregon.

Rogue Valley Genealogical Society, 95 Houston Road, Phoenix, Oregon.

Winter, Robert and Vertikoff, Alexander, *American Bungalow Style*, Simon & Schuster.

### Interviews:

Oral History interview with Ruth Browne Dew Walker Preston, Nov., 29, 1979.

Oral Interview with William Deatherage, of Frohnmayer, Deatherage, Pratt, Jamieson, Clarke & Moore, Attorneys at Law, 2592 East Barnett Road, Medford, Oregon.

Oral Interview with University of Oregon President, David Frohnmayer, Feb., 7, 2007.

Oral History Interview with Otto Frohnmayer, Sept., 13, 1983 – Oct., 4, 1983.

Oral Interview with Robert Sage, Jan., 2007 Medford, Oregon.

Putnam / Neff House  
Name of Property

Jackson Co., OR  
County and State

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

---

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary includes the entirety of tax lot 1101 in Medford, OR.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundary encompasses the entire tax parcel described in the verbal boundary description and includes all important historic resources related to the property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 1

---

## PHOTOGRAPHS

**Address:** Putnam / Neff House  
227 N. Berkeley Way  
Medford, OR 97504

**Photographer:** Dan L. Teglia, resident

**Date:** February 10, 2007

**Ink and Paper:** Resin-coated paper and archival black and white film processing

**Location of negatives:** Film, negatives held by photographer, nomination preparer

- 1 of 41 Exterior view, main façade, east elevation, looking west from Berkeley Way.
- 2 of 41 Exterior view, east façade, including detached guest cottage/garage, looking northwest.
- 3 of 41 Exterior view, main façade east elevation, looking west from Berkeley Way.
- 4 of 41 Exterior view, guest cottage/garage, south elevation, looking north.
- 5 of 41 Exterior view, main façade, northeast elevation, looking southwest.
- 6 of 41 Exterior view, main façade entry porch, east elevation, looking southwest.
- 7 of 41 Exterior view, north façade of house, garage, fence and trees looking south from Berkeley Way.
- 8 of 41 Exterior view, north façade of guest cottage/garage and north façade of house, looking south from Jackson Street.
- 9 of 41 Exterior view, north façade of guest cottage, fence and house, north façade, looking south from Jackson Street.
- 10 of 41 Exterior view, west façade of guest cottage, basketball court, and north side of house, looking northeast.
- 11 of 41 Exterior view, north façade, looking south.
- 12 of 41 Exterior view, master bedroom's sleeping porch, north façade, looking south.
- 13 of 41 Exterior view, west and south facades, looking northeast.
- 14 of 41 Exterior view, west and south facades, looking northeast.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 2

---

- 15 of 41 Exterior view, south entrance to sun room, looking north.
- 16 of 41 Interior view, entry porch with door leading to kitchen, looking east.
- 17 of 41 Interior view, entry porch with built-in cabinets and original windows, looking north toward cottage.
- 18 of 41 Interior view, kitchen's built-in butler's cabinets, swinging door opening into dining room, looking west.
- 19 of 41 Interior view, dumbwaiter cabinet, breakfast nook window off kitchen, looking north.
- 20 of 41 Interior view, dining room, north wall with recessed windows, radiators beneath window seats looking north.
- 21 of 41 Interior view, entry door into vestibule, stairway from dining room, looking southeast.
- 22 of 41 Interior view, sun room, exterior door looking southwest.
- 23 of 41 Interior view, sun room doors into dining room (left) and vestibule (right), radiator, looking northeast.
- 24 of 41 Interior view, stairway, wood-paneled walls of vestibule, view into living room, looking east.
- 25 of 41 Interior view, living room, built-in cabinets, entry door into room, looking southeast.
- 26 of 41 Interior view, living room cabinets, entry door and window seat, looking southeast.
- 27 of 41 Interior view, living room, wood paneled walls, looking northwest.
- 28 of 41 Interior view, living room, window seats, bank of windows, looking southwest.
- 29 of 41 Interior view, powder room from utility room, looking east.
- 30 of 41 Interior view, second floor landing, doors into master bedroom (left), bathroom (middle) and guest bedroom (right), looking northeast.
- 31 of 41 Interior view, master bedroom, built-in cabinets, French doors leading to sleeping porch, looking northwest.
- 32 of 41 Interior view, master bedroom, built-ins, French doors, door into bathroom, looking northeast.



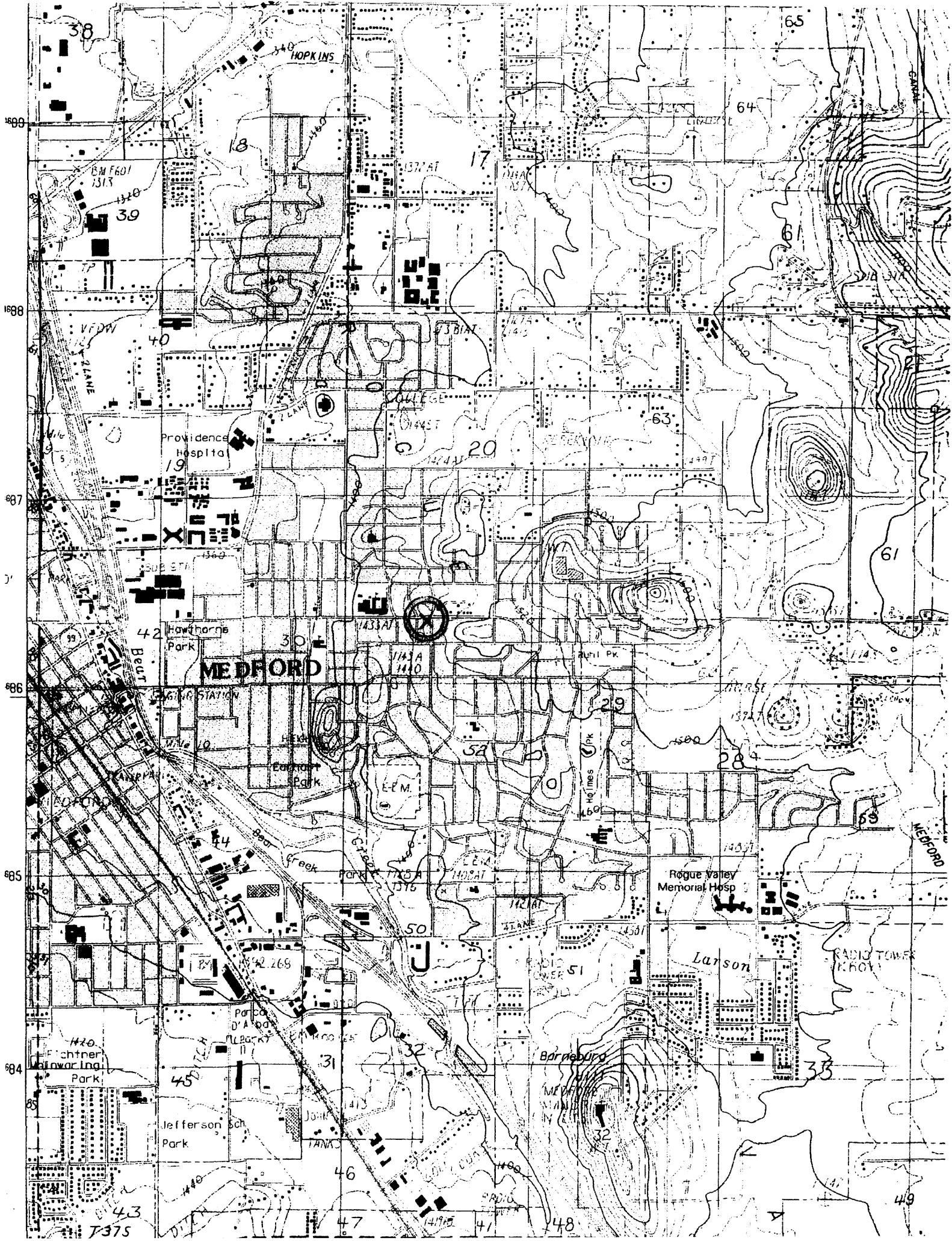
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 3

---

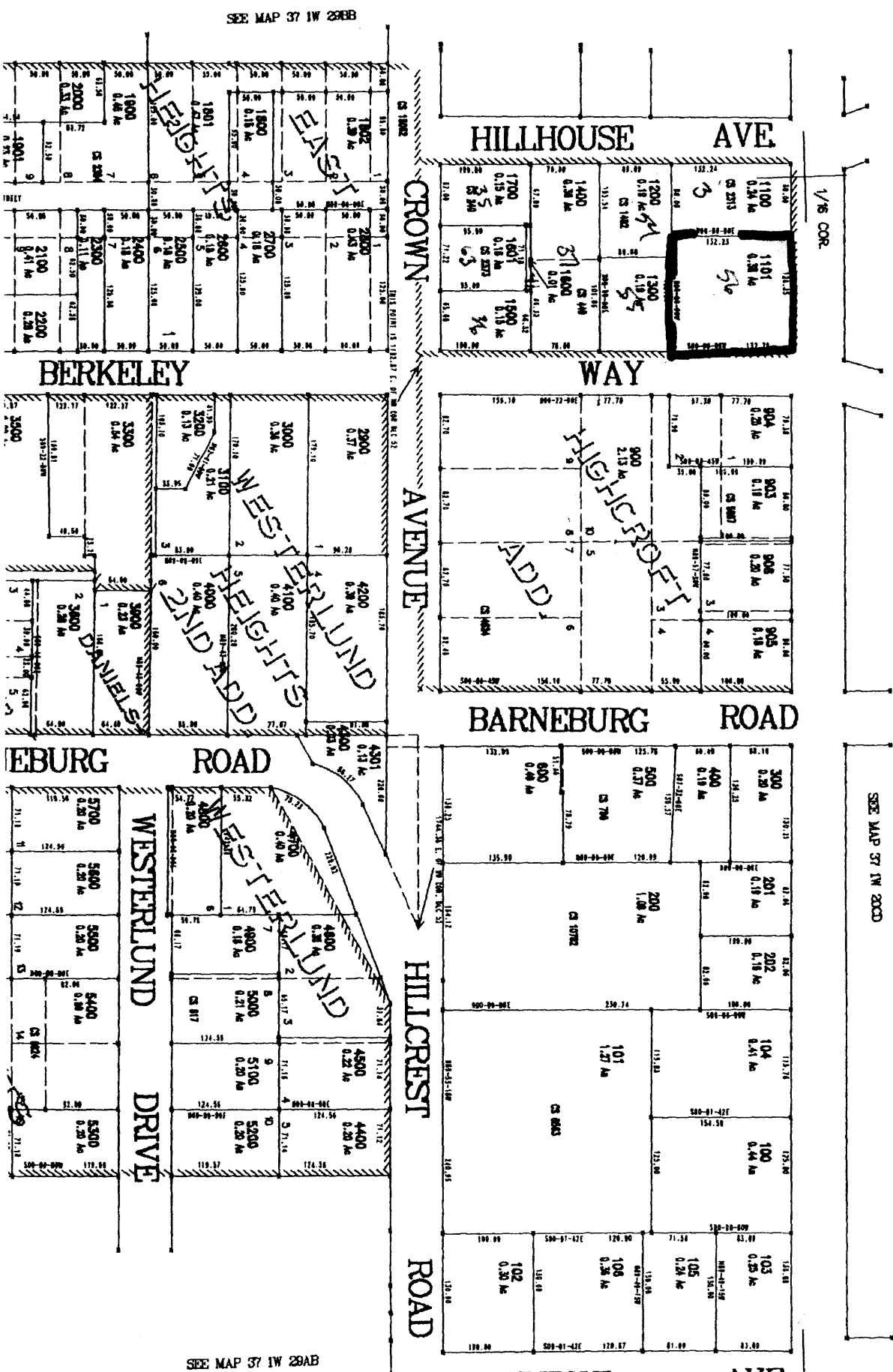
- 33 of 41 Interior view, sleeping porch from master bedroom, looking north.
- 34 of 41 Interior view, master bedroom bathroom, built-in cabinets to left of picture, looking north.
- 35 of 41 Interior view, original bathtub in master bathroom, looking east.
- 36 of 41 Interior view, guest bedroom with original picture moldings, looking north.
- 37 of 41 Interior view, sleeping porch off guest bedroom, looking southeast.
- 38 of 41 Interior view, original sink and bathtub in the second upstairs bathroom, looking east.
- 39 of 41 Interior view, built-in cabinet, finished fir floor in second upstairs bathroom.
- 40 of 41 Interior view, office room upstairs, doorway into office closet, looking northwest.
- 41 of 41 Interior view, meditation/reading room next to office, looking south.

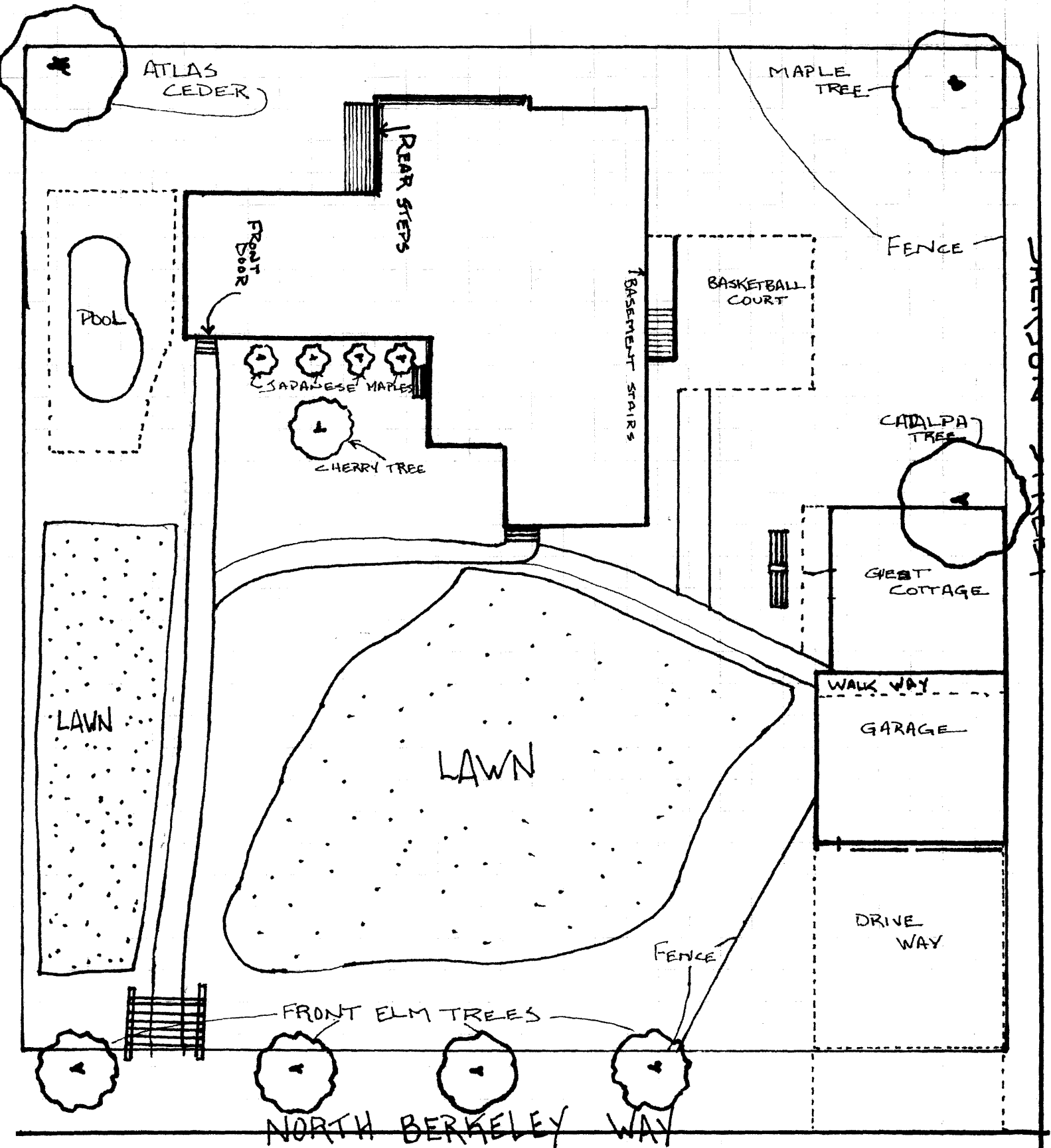


IMPORTANT  
THIS MAP FOR ASSESSMENT  
AND TAXATION PURPOSES  
ONLY

NE1/4 NW1/4 SEC. 29 T37S R1W. WM  
JACKSON COUNTY

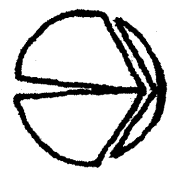
SCALE 1 INCH = 100 FEET





# SITE PLAN PUTNAM-NEFF HOUSE

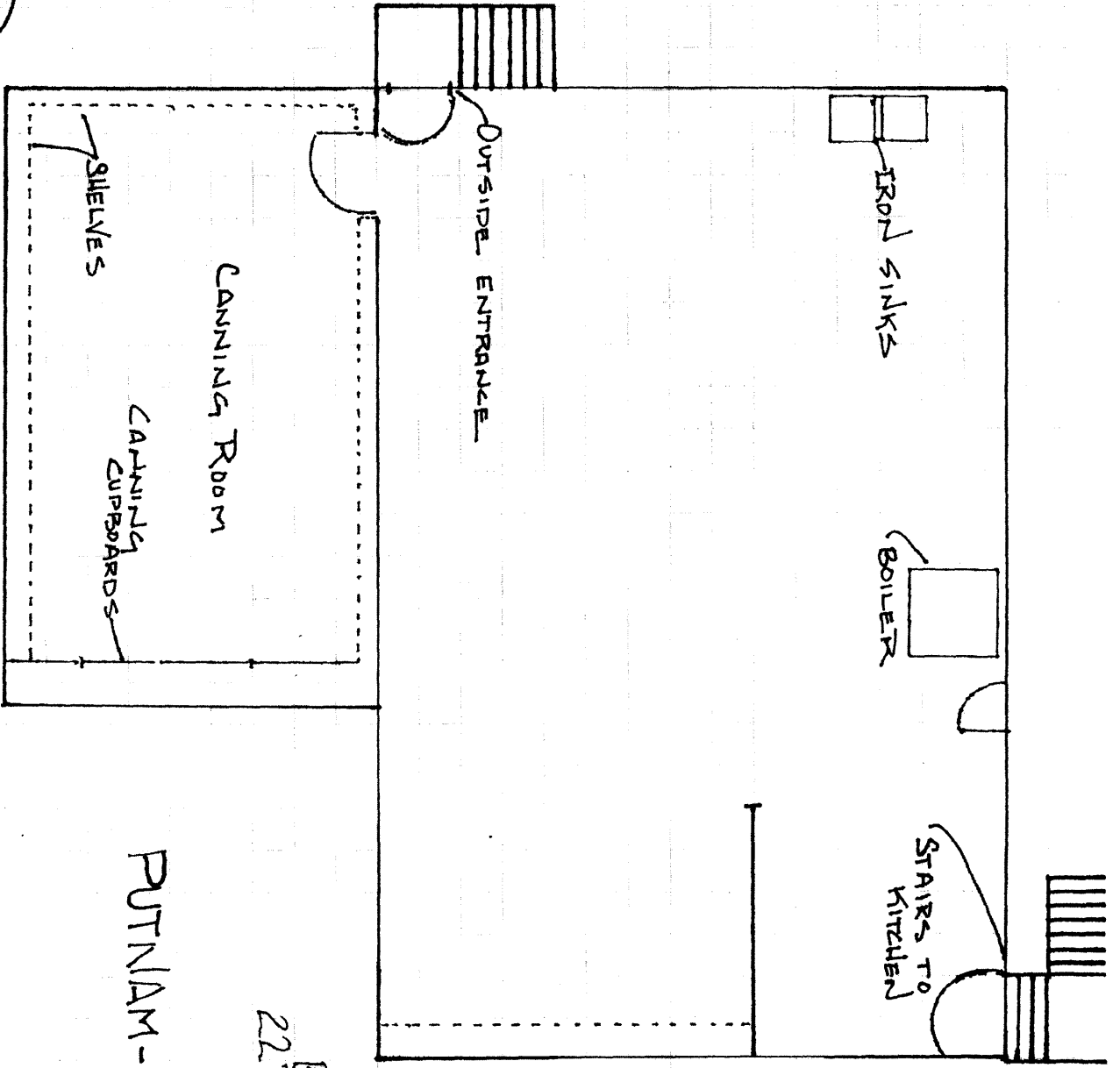
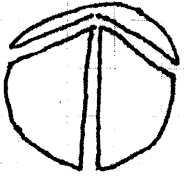
SCALE: 5/8" = 10'  
1/25/07



222 1-0-0 . . . . .

JACKSON STREET

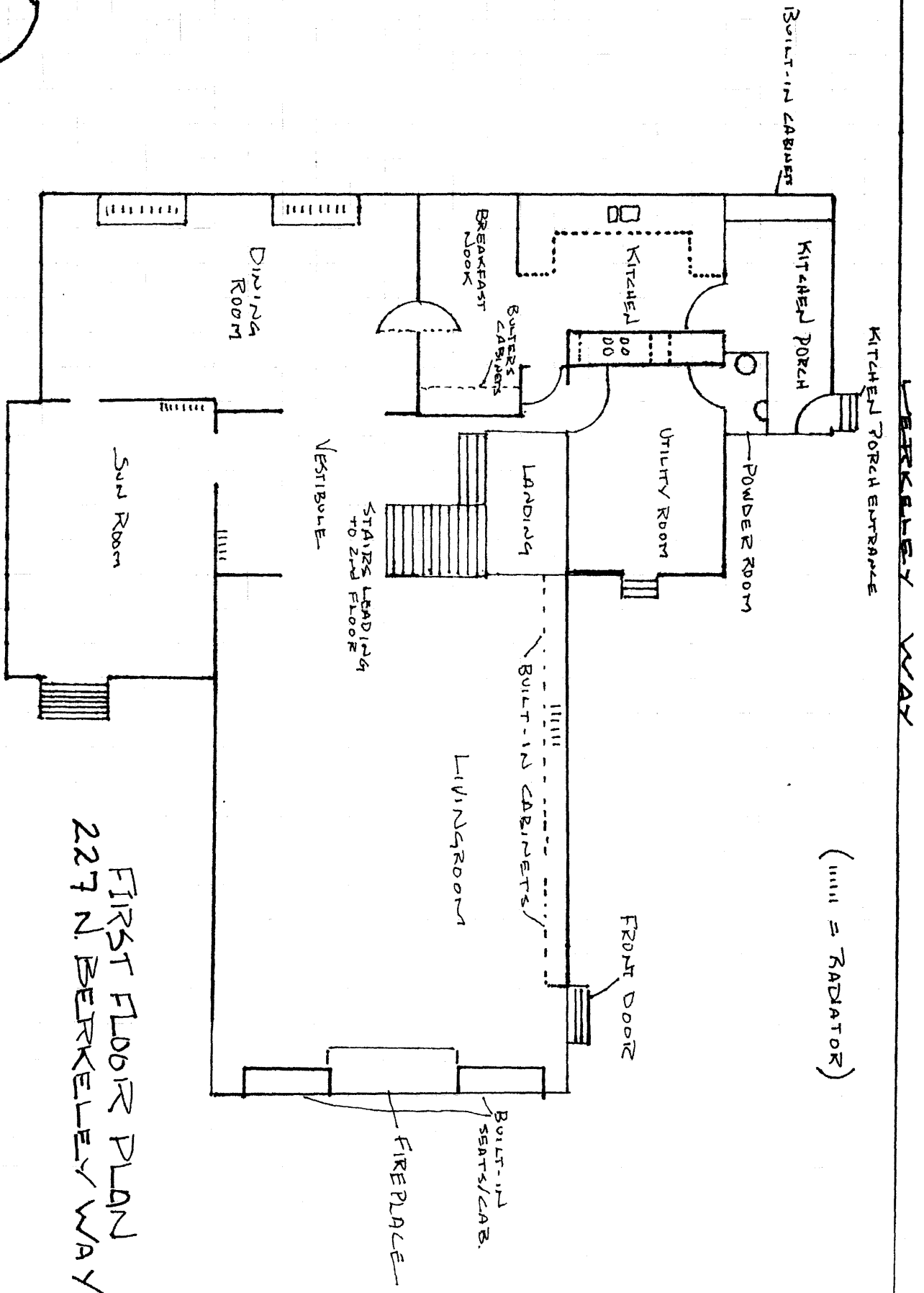
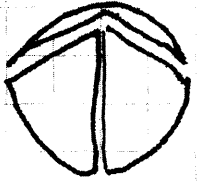
SAL, 30 2007



BASEMENT PLAN  
 227 BERKELEY WAY  
 PUTNAM-NEFF HOUSE

JACKSON STREET

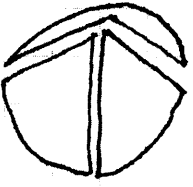
JAN. 30, 2007



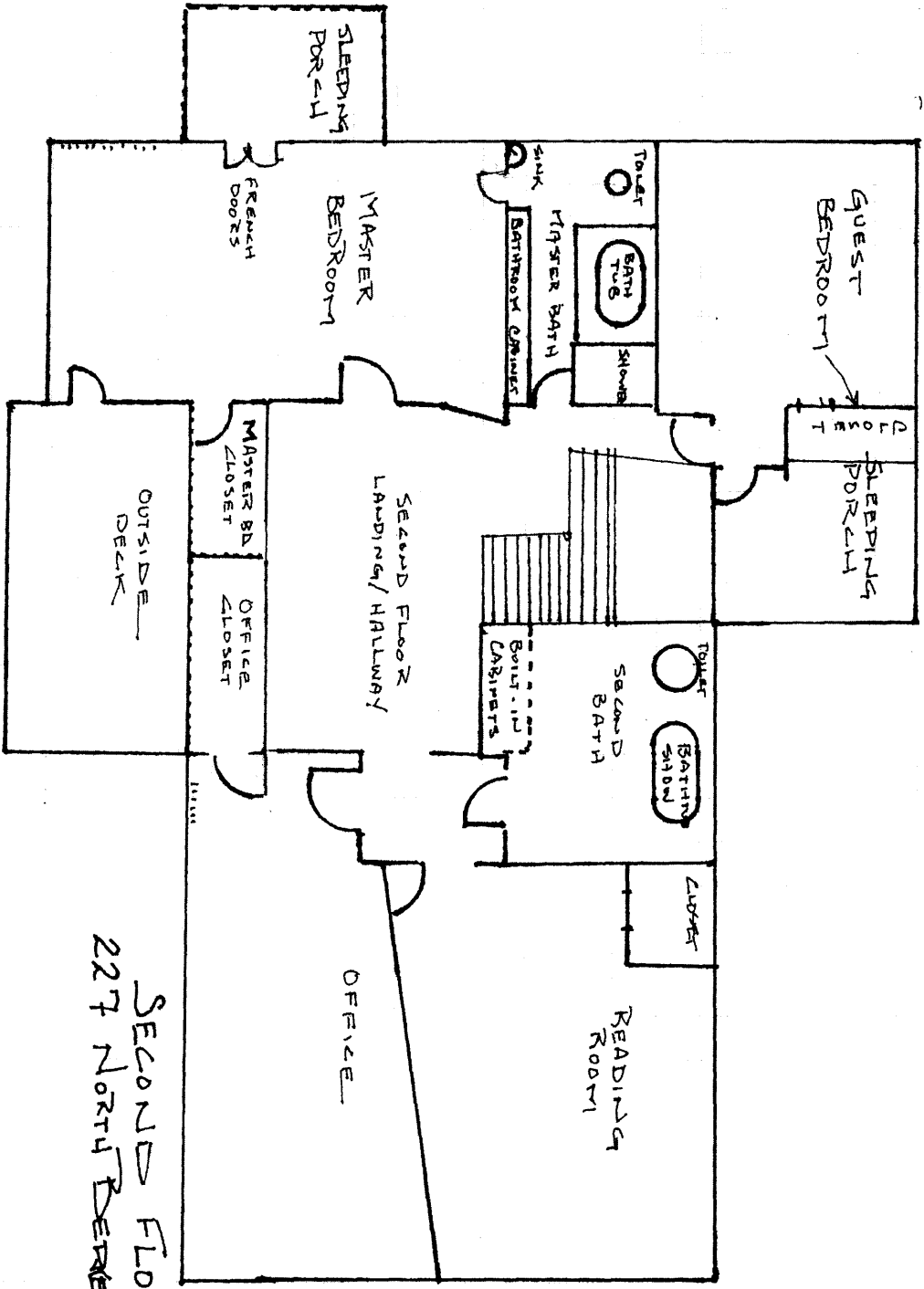
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 227 N. BERKELEY WAY  
 PUTNAM-NEFF HOUSE

JACKSON STREET

BRADLEY WAY

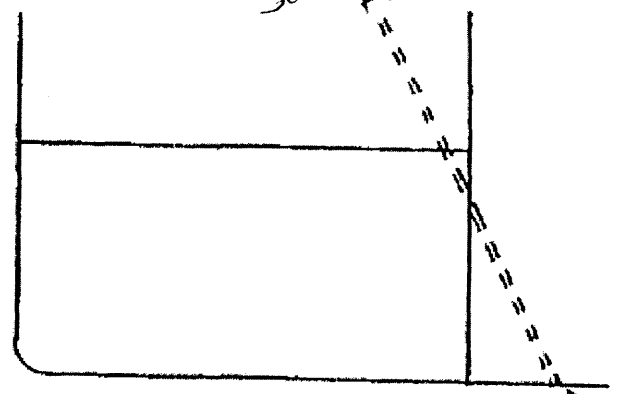
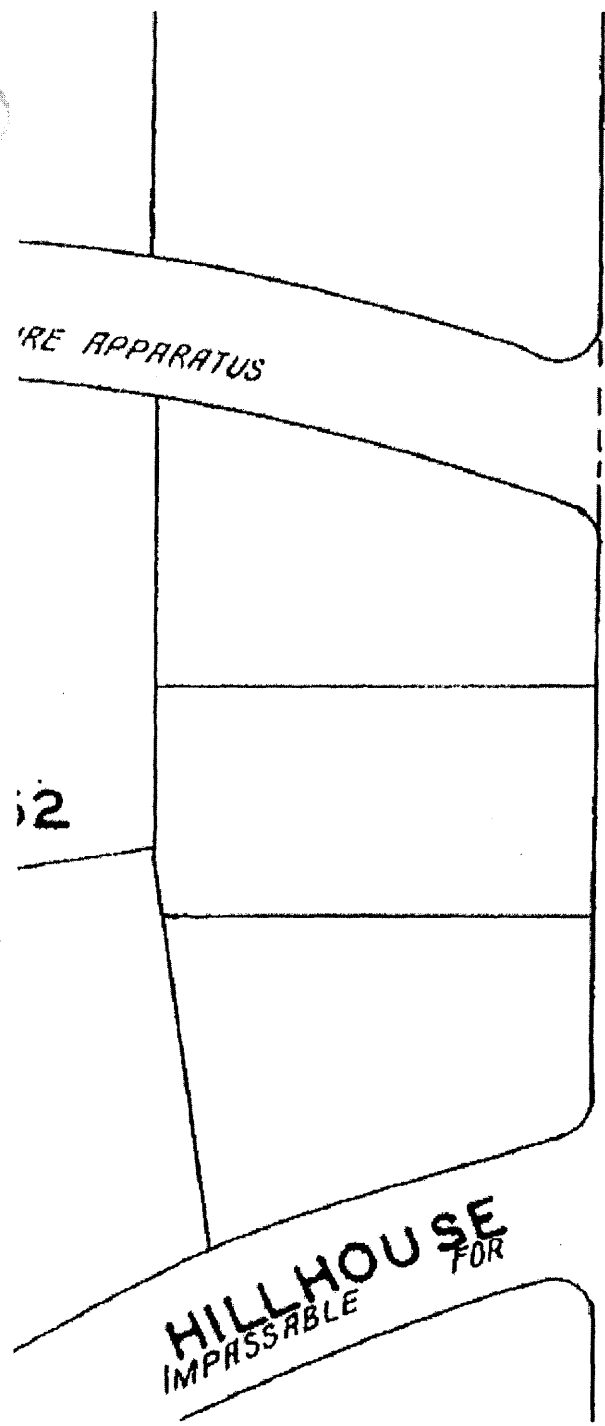


Jan, 30, 2007



SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
227 NORTH BERKELEY WAY

BRITNAM-NEFF HOUSE



FIRE APPARATUS )  
BLVD E  
FIRE

