

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 1 1986
date entered NOV 6 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic O'Kane Building Number of contributing resources: 1

and/or common Same Number of non-contributing resources: 0

2. Location

street & number 115 NW Oregon Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Bend N/A vicinity of Second Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Deschutes code 017

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Roger Nichols

street & number 115 NW Oregon Avenue

city, town Bend N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97701

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Deschutes County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Bend state Oregon 97701

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office, 525 Trade Street SE

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|----------------|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
| <input checked="" 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 _____ N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The O'Kane Building was originally designed by the Beezer Brothers of Seattle, and was built for Hugh O'Kane in 1916 to be one of the finest business blocks in central Oregon. The two story building combined retail use on the ground floor with offices and an apartment on the second floor. This Commercial style building is 100' x 140' making it the largest commercial building in downtown Bend. There is approximately 26,000 square feet of space, not including the basement space. Located on the west corner of Oregon Avenue and Bond Street, the building has been in continuous use as a retail/office since its construction.

The site is located in the SW 1/4 NE1/4 Section 32, Township 17 South, Range 12 East, Willamette Meridian, Deschutes County, Oregon. The building occupies Lots 11 and 12 of Block 10 of the Plat of Bend, Oregon. The two major building facades face Oregon Avenue and Bond Street. The building is centrally located in downtown Bend with neighboring bank buildings and other commercial structures in close proximity. Downtown Bend still retains many of its early brick stone buildings. The O'Kane Building, designed largely in reinforced concrete, is an outstanding physical landmark and tribute to Bend's early development history as she sought to become a full scale modern city. The floor plan of the building is rectangular, 140 feet along Oregon Avenue where the main entry is located and 100 feet along Bond Street where the Grand Theater, later the Palace Billiards and Cafe, was located. Currently there are five stores which front on Oregon Avenue (originally there were six). In addition to the old theater which is now the Pulse Exercise Studio, the Bond Street side of the building is made up of the spacious corner store which was originally the Cashman Clothing Store. The corner store currently houses the Body Shop. There are a total of 19 offices at present. Originally there were 20 offices.

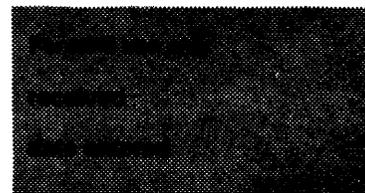
EXTERIOR

The two main building facades facing Oregon Avenue and Bond are constructed of reinforced concrete while the two minor facades on Gasoline Alley and the back side of the building are brick. Plaster work was originally carried out in "white cement and white sand trimmed with tile and ornamental plaster. All the walls of the first floor are crib walls and were covered with fireproof plaster board made of asbestos fibre."¹ The brick on the back side on the building is untreated, and on the alleyside it is painted. The building was heated by vacuum steam heat. The original system is still in the basement of the building, but the currently used system is gas heat. The roof is flat, and the L-shaped section of the roof over the offices is raised above the rest of the roof. The roof has been

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number 7

Page 2

repaired several times during the history of the building. Most recently, an entirely new roof to match the original was completed due to leakage problems. The foundation of the building is a combination of concrete and brick retaining walls with a stone fireproofing wall system in the basement.

The main plaster facade of the building was in need of repair prior to the 1985 rehabilitation of the building. The horizontal area above the transom windows was cracked, and has been stripped, replastered and repainted. The cornice also had been damaged due to roof leakage, and has recently been restored to its original form.

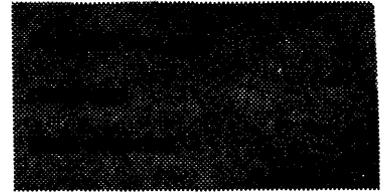
The notable features of the main facade include the stained glass transom windows and "Bend" emblem, the horizontal stringcourse below the second floor windows, and the decorative green tile which creates a border around the storefronts and a rectangular pattern inset with two diamond designs above the office windows. The green tile which was painted over has been restored to its original appearance. The Chicago Style office windows are a very important feature of the facade, clearly identifying the building as Commercial in style. These tripartite windows, with a large picture window flanked on each side by one over one double hung windows, offer generous light and ventilation to the worker.

The main entry which leads to the the second floor offices is the most decoratively elaborate architectural feature of the building. A plaster garland filled like a cornucopia of rosettes, grapes, leaves, wheat and more is lavish in its spread atop the opening of the entry. Over the doorway is a stained glass transom and transom sidelights. In the center of the transom is the unique circular design of the gold "Bend Bee" set in blue with a white border. The hand carved wood door frame is classically detailed, featuring a wooden entablature topped by honeysuckle ornaments, and a cornice supported by vertical brackets in leaf and scroll design. A row of dentils and the building's name appear in the frieze below the wood cornice. A molding using circular pellets border the clear glass transom directly above the door. The vestibule floor is of grey-blue marble and white marble tile. The vestibule ceiling has a wood diamond pattern which is repeated in the ceiling of the store entries.

The ground floor storefronts have large display windows with wood molding and brass bead molding. The original exterior bulkhead or base of the O'Kane Building was grey-blue marble. The marble was removed from the building face sometime before the present ownership. The current owner proposes to return the bases of the pilasters to grey-blue marble to match the original. The remaining bulkhead will

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

7

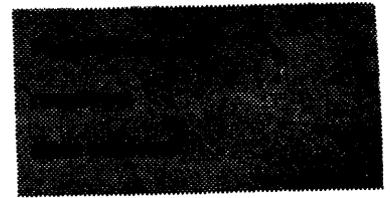
Page 3

be repaired using a material compatible with the building. Display windows are surmounted by large multi-pane stained glass transom windows with wood trim. The panes are set in zinc channels. Each transom is highlighted by a centrally located "Bend" emblem, a circular design with the word "Bend" filling the circle which is set in a square encasement. The emblem's are operable to provide for ventilation. Six of the original emblems exist on the Oregon Avenue side. The stained glass is believed to have been made by a company in Pennsylvania which is no longer in business. Many of the original panes still exist on the Oregon Avenue side of the building, though most of the stained glass on Bond Street had been removed or damaged prior to 1985. Stained glass reproduction windows have been made by John Pritchard of Bend Stained Glass in 1985. Pritchard used glass specially manufactured by KoKoMo Glass Company to match the original glass in color, texture and quality.

Three of the ground floor stores were rehabilitated in 1985 in a manner compatible with the building and using the finest craftsmanship. The storefront located on Oregon Avenue next to the alley is believed to have been remodeled sometime in the 1950's for its occupant, the Copper Room, which was a local tavern. Until 1985, this storefront had been covered by Arizona flagstone, and its design was not compatible with the rest of the building. The current owner has removed the unsightly storefront and returned it to the typical storefront design of the building which includes a central entry, large display windows, transoms, wood door with glass panel and a diamond patterned entry ceiling.

Magill Drugs storefront, to the west of the entry, was repaired in 1985 due to warping and water damage from a cooling system unit which was too heavy for its location in the transom above. The unit has been removed, the storefront has been reframed, and new glass has been placed in the display windows. The new wood door and diamond patterned ceiling are similar though wider to the other store entries. A new drugstore sign is of modern design and is quite compatible with the building.

The Pulse Exercise Studio which was the Palace Billiards and Cafe for many years and originally the Grand Theater, was remodeled in the 1970's with a plywood facade covering the entire storefront and transom area. The current owner removed the non-compatible plywood facade, and uncovered a grey-blue marble and white tile flooring, the markings for the old theater ticket booth, and the threshold for the entry to the previous establishments. The octagonal base to the original ticket booth was discovered under the floor. Though no historic photographic views of the Palace or theater have been

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number 7

Page 4

uncovered, a local historian, Jim Arbow, recalled a series of glass paneled doors on either side of two swinging doors to the Palace. Also, the theater had a series of large doors at its entry according to the Bend Bulletin. (2) The new 1985 storefront design has a series of high quality, handmade wood and glass door panels with a central entry door. The upper glass panels are designed in a leaded glass diamond pattern with colored glass highlights. The wood door has a stained glass panel with a central diamond design, recalling the diamond pattern on the building facade. The transom windows over the entry have been reproduced to match the original design.

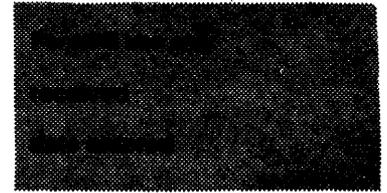
The entire building facade has been painted in a potter's clay color with a white trim. Transom windows are being returned to their original darker appearance in two tones of green. Forest green for the outer trim and a lighter green to match the tile for the inner trim. The building signage over the entry has been repaired and the letters are painted in green. The office windows which face onto the roof have been repaired or replicated where necessary. The chimney which had been built up over the years to an enormous height has been restored to its original height.

INTERIOR

The main entry is simple with original plaster walls and a high ceiling. The long stair is to the right as one enters, leading upward to the second floor offices. The stair is interrupted by a landing with a very handsome stained glass window in dark wood trim decorated with a uniquely designed "Bend" emblem. The stair railing is wrought iron. The office layout is basically L-shaped with 19 spaces along the Oregon and Bond sides of the building. The apartment spaces which were occupied by Hugh O'Kane and Helen O'Kane are located along Bond over at the southernmost end of the corridor. The otherwise elongated corridor, parallel to Oregon Avenue, is broken midway by the stair. The corridor is wide, double loaded and features dark wood trim, dark wood lacquered doors. Most of the original pebbled glass, known as Mississippi glass, is intact. It was used along the office corridor to give privacy yet allow light into the physician and dentist offices which were once here. The corridor floor is made from an unusually hard material referred to as "recolecth" which was conducive to sanitation and deadens noise. (3) The corridors and the stairway have been newly carpeted. All of the original doors and most of the original brass and nickel hardware is intact. Light fixtures consist of hanging turn of the century fixtures which are not original to the building but are elegant and compatible. The plaster walls in the corridor are slightly textured below the wainscot molding and smooth above. The ceiling and interior office walls have a smooth plaster

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number 7

Page 5

board finish which is covering the original lath and plaster finish. The interior offices have a picture molding below the ceiling and wainscot molding. Crown wallpaper has been used as a finish material below the molding.

The interior of ground floor space, originally the theater, still has two different plaster mold designs near the rear of the space and in the mezzanine. The original wood floor exists, and the projection booth area is still intact at the front of the space. Other ground floor interior spaces are not ornamented and basically are open rectangular spaces.

Future rehabilitation plans will include the interior design of some or all of the retail spaces and the completion of the interior finishing in the offices.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) "New O'Kane Building is Modern Type," The Bend Bulletin, November 22, 1916.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) Ibid.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric | ___ community planning | ___ landscape architecture | ___ religion |
| ___ 1400-1499 | ___ archeology-historic | ___ conservation | ___ law | ___ science |
| ___ 1500-1599 | ___ agriculture | ___ economics | ___ literature | ___ sculpture |
| ___ 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | ___ education | ___ military | ___ social/ |
| ___ 1700-1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music | humanitarian |
| ___ 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy | ___ theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | ___ communications | ___ industry | ___ politics/government | ___ transportation |
| | | ___ invention | | ___ other (specify) |

Specific dates 1916 **Builder/Architect** Beezer Brother's, architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The O'Kane Building, built at the corner of Oregon Avenue and Bond Street in downtown Bend, Oregon in 1916, is, historically, the largest retail/office building in the central Oregon trading center. Two stories in height and 100' x 140' in plan, it represents the first use of reinforced concrete in the locale, although concrete was used only for wall construction of the street elevations. Designed in the Commercial style by the Beezer Brothers firm of Seattle, it replaced the Bend Hotel, which burned on the same site in 1915. The new building was the project of Hugh O'Kane (1857-1930), a colorful figure and entrepreneur of significance to the commercial upbuilding of the Deschutes County seat. Not only was it intended by its builder to be substantially fire-resistant, it was to be the town's finest modern business block. Considerable attention was lavished on its finish work and its Classical detailing, including a fine, carved Greek architrave for the principal entrance. Recently rehabilitated, the building conveys its original function and appearance to a remarkable degree. The distinguishing characteristics of its street facades are Chicago School windows and leaded, multi-paned transom lights above generous, storefront display windows. Central panels of the transoms (14 in all) display the stylized "Bend" motif in colored art glass which was the inspiration for the city's unofficial identifying symbol, or logogram. The O'Kane Building meets National Register criterion "c" as a finely detailed commercial block which remains the largest of its type in downtown Bend to the present day. It is significant for its early use of reinforced concrete and as a locally distinctive example of architecture in the Commercial style. The building is secondarily significant for its association with the commercial enterprises it housed, many of which were substantial contributors to the local economy from 1916 to the time of the Great Depression. The O'Kane Building was in effect, a major shopping center for central Oregon during this period¹ and was the first meeting place of the Deschutes County Court.

The building was designed by the Beezer Brothers, a Seattle architectural firm which also designed the First National Bank, the Sather Building and the old Deschutes Investment Company Building in Bend.² Louis Beezer, partner, is well-known as the architect of many Roman Catholic churches in the San Francisco Bay Area.³ The stained glass "Bend" emblem, which is set in the center of the transom over each storefront in the O'Kane Building, has been a symbol of the City's model of success and a trademark for the Shevlin-Hixon Lumber Company for many years.

Hugh O'Kane truly represented the spirit of the Western pioneer adventurer, playing just about every role imaginable: enterpriser and builder, lightweight boxer, wrestler, footracer, sailor, fillibusterer, miner, stagecoach driver, dispatch rider among hostile Indians, racehorse owner, horse trainer and packer. "Probably no other resident of Oregon had more varied experience."⁴ Born of Irish parents, O'Kane exemplified the young stowaway immigrant working his way up in the New World, selling papers and shining shoes at the age of 12 years old. At night he learned the cutter trade from a tailor in New York City and went on to be very successful. He was sent on one occasion to London and Paris for a large American tailoring concern. In the 1870s, his thirst for adventure found (continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.32 acre (less than one)

Quadrangle name Bend, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |
|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

B

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

C

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

D

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

E

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

F

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

G

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

H

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Verbal boundary description and justification The O'Kane Building occupies Lots 11 and 12, of Block 10, Plat of Bend, Deschutes County, Oregon. The parcel is 100' x 140' and is otherwise described as Tax Lot 6200, Deschutes County Assessor's Map Ref. No. 17 12 32AC.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karen Zisman, President, Sally Donovan, Research Assistant

organization Historic Dimensions Inc. date March 15, 1986

street & number 8949 SW 9th Drive telephone (503) 246-8944

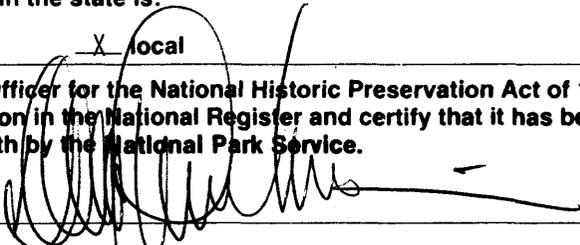
city or town Portland state Oregon 97219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date September 23, 1986

For NPS use only

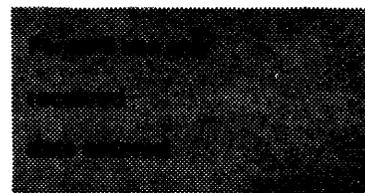
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 National Register date 11-6-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

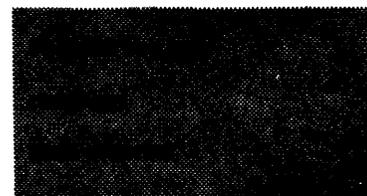
2

him on the Northern Pacific Railroad bound for N. Dakota. There he found himself in the middle of the Custer-Indian War packing provisions in many pioneer adventures in Colorado, Montana and N. Dakota. In 1881 he was employed by Tom Cannon, champion Greco-Roman wrestler of the world, as the manager of an extended campaign in Europe. Later he managed Ed Skinner and Marley Kettleman, two crack sprinters. In 1895, he opened a large hotel in Grangeville, Idaho, headquarters for an extensive national race horse-managing business. In 1903, he came to Bend and built the Bend Hotel, a landmark of Central Oregon a very popular meeting place for commercial men, homesteaders and locals which was destroyed by fire on August 30, 1915. (5)

O'Kane was not the only famous personage associated with the O'Kane Building. Many of the building's tenants were strong contributors to the development of early Bend history. Among them was Maurice P. Cashman, Bend pioneer and founder of the Cashman store, who "entered business in 1916 and built the business known for most of this century as one of the leading clothing establishments in Oregon." (6) Cashman's was one of the oldest firms in the interior country and remained in one location in the O'Kane Building for many years. (7) H.H. De Armond, an attorney-at-law who was also one of the original building tenants, was the first District Attorney of Deschutes County, among other important civic roles. (8)

Many of the original establishments themselves are of note, including the Grand Theater, which was soon converted to the Palace, a very popular saloon and bar for many years. Magill-Erskine Drug is the oldest business to remain in one location in Bend. The first confectionery store in Central Oregon, operated by H.D. Bride, and the first jewelry store in Bend, operated by Myron H. Symons, were also originally located here. (9)

The teen years in Bend signified the major change of a primarily cattle-grazing sleepy town of seven families into a major boom town of loggers, industry and modernized building practices. The 1911 arrival of the the Great Northern and Union Pacific Railroads, along with the decision of the Shevlin-Hixon Company and Brooks-Scanlon to build sawmills on each side of the Deschutes River, caused a stampede of new arrivals and job seekers in Bend. The population grew from 258 people in 1902 to 536 in 1910 to 5,415 in 1920. (10) "At the end of 1911, Bend had 384 school-age children, an increase of 86% over 1910 and the greatest increase in any city in the United States according to the Bend Bulletin." (11) In 1912, Bend started building with brick instead of lumber. (12) In 1916, the O'Kane Building signified a new era of building with reinforced concrete.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

3

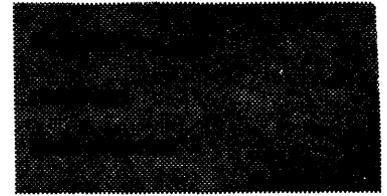
ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The O'Kane Building is significant architecturally due to its distinctive characteristics of the Commercial Style, its representation of the early modern development period in the local history of Bend, its representative qualities of the modern commercial building type, its method of construction and its representation of the work of a well-known architect. This 1916 building is the largest commercial structure in Downtown Bend. It is the earliest commercial building in Bend built with its main facade of concrete and appears to have employed the first major use of reinforced concrete in the local area.

The O'Kane Building, in its modern design, was built in response to the major new era of development spurred on by the two major railroads which reached Bend for the first time in 1911. The arrival of the railroads, the availability of new building materials and building machinery by train in 1912, and the development of two sawmills in 1915 and 1916 caused thousands of people to flock to Bend in search of jobs. The population in Bend boomed, as did the building industry, during those early teen years. Anticipating a booming new city, it is not surprising that Hugh O'Kane built the O'Kane Building on a rather grand scale and of modern design for Bend at that time. (13)

The O'Kane Building is a significant example of the modern commercial type of building in Bend with multiple retail stores and offices under one roof. As the largest commercial building of its kind in downtown Bend today, the O'Kane Building was far ahead of its time in 1916. The building was "reputed to be the finest business block in Central Oregon" when it was built, and had 15 wide bays, 6 stores and a theater on the ground floor and 20 offices on the second floor. (14) The mixed-use business complex offered the best in natural and modern lighting, ventilation and spaciousness. Its predecessor, the commercial slot building, which was the predominant commercial type in Bend, could not offer the variety, excitement, or modernity that the O'Kane could. The design of the building is pleasing, using rich materials such as stained glass, ornamented plaster and green tile. The concrete material had a clean, elegant appearance compared to the smaller brick slot buildings. The centrally-located stairway to the second floor offices is marked by a uniquely designed "Bend" emblem set in stained glass over the stair landing. The dark wood trim and doors give the offices a high degree of quality and class befitting this new modern type.

The O'Kane Building is a fine example of the Commercial Style of architecture which had its origins in the late 1800's and early 1900's in Chicago. Though different from the tall three to twelve-story Chicago Commercial Style buildings, the basic tenets of the Commercial Style apply; expansive bays, regular pattern, flat roof,

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

4

Chicago-style windows and the geometric ornamentation which is subordinate but enhancing to the fenestration, are characteristics of this building which are major defining features of the style. (15) The facade of the building reads like a taut skin over a regular structural module. Piers and spandrels are in one plane. Ornamentation is reduced to green tile and diamond patterning, simple circular paterae, an elaborate plaster garland over the main entry, and stained glass transoms highlighted by the "Bend" emblem. The ornamentation is of fine craftsmanship yet subtle as it adds a sense of elegance and richness to the facade.

Generally, the Commercial style incorporates a fairly even balance between its horizontal and vertical elements. In the case of the O'Kane Building, the tendency is for a somewhat stronger emphasis on the horizontal, due to the fact that the building is only two stories in height and the demand for the highrise type of commercial building was almost non-existent compared to the east coast, where land costs were at a premium. Elements such as the O'Kane Building signage and the transom windows -- which raise the ceilings of the ground floor-- give some vertical emphasis to the building.

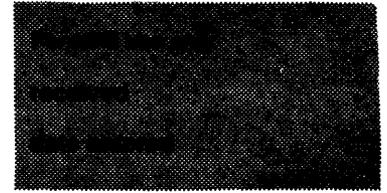
Another variation of the generic Commercial Style can be seen in the specialized local detail; the stained glass "Bend" emblem in the transoms and the stair landing, and the finely-designed "Bend Bee" in the transom over the main entry, clearly identify this building as an object of civic pride and local adaptation. The Bend Park Company who copyrighted the emblem stated that they intended "to devote a lifetime to making this brand a coveted guaranty of integrity, optimism, persistence, cooperation, hospitality and municipal patriotism - in other words and succinctly, to make it an emblem of TRUE SUCCESS." (16) The O'Kane Building, in its longtime success and popularity as a building workplace, shopping place and entertainment/social center, has lived up to the emblem's motto for seventy years. The emblem has also been used by the Shevlin-Hixon Company to mark part of its products and by Bend Inc. in the 1980's to symbolize the Merchants Association.

The O'Kane Building holds true to the Commercial Styles concepts of clean, efficient, light, airy and roomy retail and office space. These modern building concepts were important in Bend, a city which sought to become the major metropolis of Central Oregon. The flat roofline, with the exception of the building sign, and the unornamented building cap finish the building in the vein of the simple level skylines of the Commercial Style.

The O'Kane Building marks the transition in Bend between the use of brick and the use of concrete as a primary building material. The building presents itself in concrete and stucco on its two major

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

5

facades on Oregon Avenue and Bond Street, while employing brick on its alleyside and backside (southwest side), which are service or utilitarian in use. The wide spans of the bays made the use of reinforced concrete a necessity. The formwork for the concrete was quite elaborate and can be seen in the early construction photograph of the building. The foundation is a combination of stone, concrete and brick. Stone firewalls are built throughout the basement, separating each retail space to prevent fire from spreading. An early news article from the Bend Bulletin of March 8, 1916 describes the anticipated basic size, materials and cost of the building:

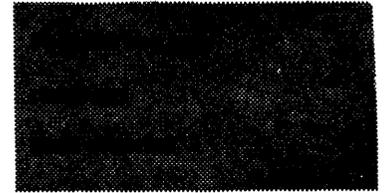
"Mr. O'Kane's lot is 100 x 140 feet in size and, except for necessary areaways in the rear, will be completely covered by the new building, which will cost close to \$30,000. So far as possible, all material used in the construction of the building will be local products and only local labor will be employed. Brick to the number of 300,000 have already been contracted for with the Bend Brick and Lumber Company."

Upon completion of construction, the Bulletin indicates that the O'Kane Building "costs approximately \$50,000, is semi-fireproof in construction... The Oregon Street and Bond Street walls are constructed of reinforced concrete and the rear walls are of brick." (18) The combination of the materials used on the O'Kane Building was typical, due to the easy availability of concrete, brick and stone in the area. The Bend Bulletin boasts on July 30, 1913, that "BEND IS EQUIPPED WITH ALL NECESSARY BUILDING MATERIALS." The article goes on to say:

"Brick, Stone, Sand and Gravel, in Addition to Lumber, Simplify Building Operations Here. Many things contribute to make a great city, but there is no one thing more essential to greatness than that a modern city be well built. Now, in order to be well built, it is necessary that the city be possessed of an ample and cheap supply of the most permanent building materials and when it comes to this question, Bend undoubtedly stands in a class by herself, among small cities.

"If a prospective builder in Bend wishes to use concrete construction, he finds available within the city limits plenty of the two essentials for this class of work namely, sand and gravel. Cement, of course is the main ingredient of concrete, and Bend has to ship all her cement in. It is an excellent brand, however, and the point of manufacture is relatively near..."

Oregon is plentiful in the natural resources used to make concrete-- namely, sand, gravel, water and lime and clay for cement. These resources were not developed, however, until the early 20th century in

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

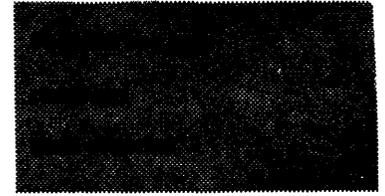
6

this state. Concrete was rediscovered in the Western World as a building material in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, after the last lapse of concrete construction with the fall of the Roman Empire. The even later use of concrete in Oregon, and particularly Central Oregon, was directly connected to the plentiful supply of local lumber and the limited transportation routes for bringing other building materials into the interior Oregon Country. This limitation ended when the railroads reached Bend in 1911. The importation of cement was very common during its early history in Oregon and is well documented in the records of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The two cement facilities which existed in Oregon in 1916 were the Beaver Portland

Cement Company at Gold Hill and the Oregon Portland Cement Company in Oswego. The exact origins of the cement used in the O'Kane Building are not known, though it may have come from one of these facilities or have been imported from a nearby location out-of-state. (19)

The industry of poured-in-place concrete and concrete block, predominant in Oregon from 1895 to 1915, differs significantly from reinforced concrete, due to the fact that the former materials act basically according to the same principles of compression as their predecessors, brick and stone. (20) Reinforced concrete revolutionized the modern commercial building by adding the principle of tensile strength to construction methods, thus allowing for the spanning of much greater distances for wide bays and large multi-story buildings. Though reinforced concrete was first proposed by French architects in the late 18th century, it was not popularized in the United States until the early half of the 19th century and did not emerge in Oregon for another one hundred years. (21)

The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of Oregon show a great increase in the number of concrete buildings recorded from 1908-1915, due in part to the greater number of communities being mapped, but also due in reaction to the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, where the remarkable survival capacity of concrete was discovered. In 1908, reinforced concrete buildings were recorded in Portland and Astoria. Initially, reinforced concrete was used in selective portions of buildings, adding reinforcing, but later the notion of the reinforced concrete shell was developed providing a whole new technology of fenestration which opens the interiors of the building to greater light, provided the opportunity for expansive window displays and was fireproof or semi-fireproof as in the O'Kane Building. Generally, the O'Kane Building followed other basic principles in the use of concrete for commercial buildings including attempting to soften the rough surfaces with a smooth coat on the primary facades which provided waterproofing as well a visually pleasant appearance. It was common that the less important alley facades would remain untreated. (22)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number 8

Page 7

BEEZER BROTHERS, ARCHITECTS

The Seattle architectural firm known as the Beezer Brothers designed the O'Kane Building. The firm's urban orientation gives some explanation for the choice of a modern Commercial Style design and the design and early use of reinforced concrete in Bend. In Bend, the firm also designed the First National Bank in 1912, the Sather Building and the first building used for the Deschutes Investment Company. (23) The Seattle firm is known primarily for their school, hospital and church designs in Seattle and the San Francisco area, which included the Parish School of the Church of the Immaculate Conception School in Seattle. "Louis Beezer was known as the architect of many Roman Catholic Churches in San Francisco and the Bay area, of which St. Dominico's Church is a notable example. Louis Beezer designed bank buildings in Medford, Oregon and Walla Walla, Washington, the latter considered to be his most important work." (24)

ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF SIGNIFICANT PERSONS

HUGH O'KANE, OWNER

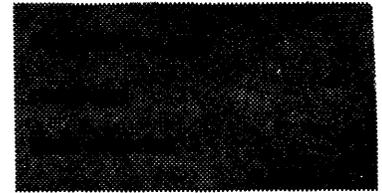
Hugh O'Kane, original owner and builder of the O'Kane Building, was one of the most adventurous and colorful figures in the history of the western part of this country in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. His life's story reads like a chronicle of intriguing escapades of a world traveler and businessman. During his 73 years, Hugh O'Kane was a "lightweight boxer, a wrestler, a footracer, a sailor, a fillibusterer, a miner, a stage coach driver, a dispatch rider among hostile Indians, a racehorse owner, a horse trainer and packer" among other roles. Coming to Bend in 1903, O'Kane exemplified the tough-spirited men in the early years of Bend's development who were willing to take chances and enjoyed the wide open territory. (25)

Born in 1857 in the pastoral country of County Antrim, Ireland, Hugh O'Kane grew restless and stowed away to Greenock and then to Liverpool, England...

"Several months were consumed in rambling about the Portuguese and Spanish coasts. Young O'Kane returned in a ship's hull again to Liverpool, and by the pedestrian route covered a considerable part of England. Still restless, O'Kane, with several lads about his own age, stowed away again at Liverpool. Thoughtless of any destination, the boys woke up one morning in New York harbor. They wised themselves up as to the methods of evading the customs officers and landed ashore during the night. Even in those days New York was not such a small city, and youthful Hughie was

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

8

compelled immediately to look for a livelihood, for he had no pennies in his pocket.

"Shining boots on Bleecker Street and selling evening papers was his first adventure. His first night in New York was spent at the Newsboy's Home, where he obtained supper, bed and breakfast for the low cost-of-living price of 11 cents. Young Hughie found boot-blacking and paper-selling sufficiently remunerative to enable him to take up night school work under the direction of an expert tailor. Under this man, O'Kane learned the trade of a cutter, which trade he plied during the early morning and afternoon hours, and selling papers in the evenings." (26)

At 12 years of age, Hughie was capable of eluding the searchings of his parents, making a good living and becoming a successful cutter. On one occasion, he was sent to London and Paris for a large American tailoring concern. (27)

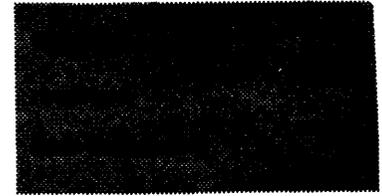
It was not long before the excitement of the West opening up swept Hugh O'Kane onward in the 1870's, this time by route of the Northern Pacific Railroad, which was pushing its way through the states of North Dakota and Minnesota. His first stop was St. Paul and later he went to Bismarck, North Dakota. O'Kane claimed to have met up with many notable roughneck characters in those wild days. An account from the Oregonian on February 18, 1930, tells it this way:

"Dr. Holladay, with 20 notches on his gun, landed in Tombstone and one of his first acquaintances was O'Kane, who was present when the Brooklyn doctor killed his first man. O'Kane was present when Calamity Jane finished a bad man. He knew Quantrell, the guerilla, when the latter, operating under an assumed name, was operating in Montana and when the Custer Troops were massacred. O'Kane was a few miles distant, serving as a packer with Terry's command. He knew Sitting Bull, Gall and other chiefs of that era personally."

The Black Hills and the gold rush beckoned O'Kane in the late 1870's to early 1880's, where he made a fortune of \$50,000 and later lost it gambling in Denver in three short days. He then wound up back in Montana, digging graves and operating a stage coach line through hostile Indian country. He knew the leading characters of that state and watched them make their millions. (28)

In the early 1880's, O'Kane was employed by Tom Cannon, at that time champion Greco-Roman wrestler of the world:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING Item number 8 Page 9

"O'Kane was employed by Cannon to manage an extended campaign in Europe, which took him to many of the most important ports and cities in the Mediterranean Sea. He was away on this trip more than 14 months returning to America later to manage a tour for Ed Skinner and Marley Kettleman, two crack sprinters, on their trip to Australia, where, under O'Kane's management, they won the famous Melbourne cup." (29)

Soon thereafter, Hugh O'Kane married Helen A. Wright of Helena, Montana. In 1895 O'Kane first got into the hotel business in Grangeville, Idaho, where he opened a large hotel. As for the Idaho mines, Mr. O'Kane had made several stakes winning and losing overnight but was "always willing to tackle another bet." Grangeville became his headquarters for managing an extensive race horse circuit. Helen O'Kane had a hard time keeping up with Hugh as he traveled to almost every state in the Union managing horseraces. (30)

Though specific dates are not given, one report of O'Kane's travels includes the West coast of Africa, where he turned up in a trading schooner in the same vicinity the Trader Horn subsequently made famous. "He was a boxer in Cape Town. Later he was engaged to smuggle arms and ammunitions into Cuba for the rebels, who were endeavoring to overthrow Spanish rule. Captured, he was a prisoner in Moro castle for nine months." (31)

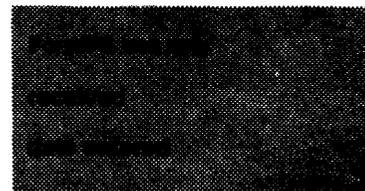
Upon coming to Bend in 1903, O'Kane built the Bend Hotel which was a well-known local landmark. In 1904 O'Kane nearly ran for the first councilman position but due to a toss of the dice not in his favor, the honor went F.H. Shonquest. (32) When the Bend hotel burned down in the 1915 fire, O'Kane built the O'Kane Building. In his later years, the 300 pound O'Kane could always be found propped up in his chair against the O'Kane Building, fast asleep. During his last years, he moved to Portland, where he could be found in a chair at the Imperial fast asleep until somebody came to wake him. He died on February 16, 1930, survived by his widow, Helen, a brother, James O'Kane of Philadelphia and a sister, Mrs. Mary Cross, in Ireland. (33)

NOTABLE BUILDING TENANTS

Several of the original building tenants are also notable figures in the local history of Bend. Maurice P. Cashman, Bend pioneer, was the owner and founder of the Cashman Clothing Store, one of the leading clothing establishments in Oregon. Of Irish descent, Cashman came to America as a young man and moved to Bend in 1911, from St. Paul, Minnesota. In Bend he became associated with Hugh O'Kane through a position he held at the Bend Hotel until 1915, when the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING

Item number

8

Page

10

hotel was burned down. (34) The Cashman store occupied the corner frontage on Oregon Avenue and Bond Street and was specifically constructed for the Cashman firm. On September 5, 1956, the Bend Bulletin announced the observance of the store's 40th Anniversary, noting: "It is one of the oldest stores in the interior country. It is now operated by the second generation of the Cashman family, with Pat Cashman as President."

Harvey H. De Armond, the first District Attorney of Deschutes County, occupied one of the building's second floor offices. De Armond was the vice president of the Oregon Irrigation Congress and was manager of the Bend Commercial Club in 1914. (35)

Magill-Erskine Druggists first opened their business in the O'Kane Building and have remained to this day in their original location. Now known as Magill Drugs, the store is believed to be the oldest commercial establishment to have remained in one location in Bend. Lloyd Magill, original senior partner of the firm, was a graduate of the College of Pharmacy of the Oregon Agricultural College in 1912. He was associated with the Owl Pharmacy in Bend and was employed by Sherwin and Moore, prominent Eugene druggists, before establishing his drugstore. (36)

The building's tenants had excellent reputations as fine, upright professionals and businessmen in the community. The Bend Bulletin reported on November 22, 1916:

"Enterprise is everywhere patent among the business and professional men who have taken up rooms in the new O'Kane Building during the last two weeks. It has been the determination of every one of the men whose businesses are found in the handsome structure to maintain the high standard shown in construction of the building."

Among the original tenants in the building were Myron H. Symons, jeweler, Dr. Charles H. Francis, optometrist and optician, Louis Bennett, grocery store operator, L.C. Ruxdon, operator of the Grand Theater and H.D. McBride, who opened here what is considered to be the finest confectionery store in Central, Oregon. (37) Myron Symons jewelry store was the first of its kind in Bend. One of the first offices occupied was leased by Dr. S.C. Vandervert and Dr. R.L. Edwards. (38) Dr. Vandervert remained in practice for at least forty years in that location. (39) Other second floor occupants included the Council Chambers, H.J. Overturf, County Commissioner, the Central Credit Bureau, a variety of physician and dentist offices and Hugh O'Kane's apartment and office. (40) The first meeting of the Deschutes County government was held here. County headquarters were first located in two rooms of the O'Kane Building. (41)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

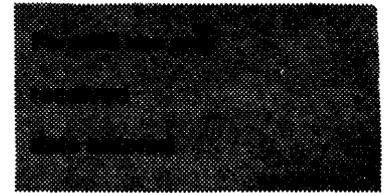


Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING Item number 8 Page 11

- 1 "New O'Kane Building is Modern Type," The Bend Bulletin, November 22, 1916.
- 2 "O'Kane to Build," The Bend Bulletin, March 8, 1916.
- 3 Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects, (deceased), p. 48.
- 4 "O'Kane, World Adventurer Answers Last Great Call," The Morning Oregonian, February 18, 1930.
- 5 "O'Kane's Life is Checkered," The Bend Bulletin, November 22, 1916.
- 6 "Cashman Store Dates Beginning in Distant 1916," The Bend Bulletin, August 20, 1952.
- 7 "Cashman Store Observes 40th Anniversary," The Bend Bulletin, September 5, 1956.
- 8 "O'Kane Building Opening 40 years ago Recalled," The Bend Bulletin, September 5, 1956.
- 9 "Tenants in Building are Up-to-Date," The Bend Bulletin, November 22, 1916.
- 10 Gribikov, Joyce, Pioneer Spirits of Bend, Bend, Oregon: Joyce Gribikov, 1980.
- 11 Williams, Elsie Horn, A Pictorial History of the Bend Country, Bend, Oregon: Elsie Horn Williams, 1983, p. 71.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid., p. 99.
- 14 "O'Kane to Build," The Bend Bulletin, March 8, 1916.
- 15 Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969, p. 183.
- 16 Advertisement of "Bend" emblem, The Bend Bulletin, July 3, 1912.
- 17 Unassigned.
- 18 "New O'Kane Building is Modern Type," The Bend Bulletin, November 22, 1916.
- 19 Weiss, Harry Moisseiff, University of Oregon Graduate School Master's Thesis: Early Concrete Construction in Oregon 1880-1915, p. 12-26.
- 20 Ibid., p. 1-12 and 48, 49.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

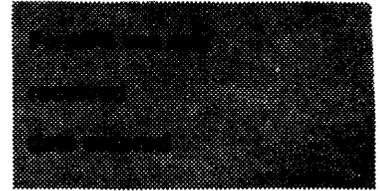


Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING Item number 8 Page 12

- 21 Condit, Carl W., American Building: Materials and Techniques from the Beginning of the Colonial Settlements to the Present, Chicago and London: University Press, 1982, p. 168.
- 22 Weiss, op. cit., p. 44.
- 23 "O'Kane to Build," op. cit.
- 24 Withey, op. cit.
- 25 "O'Kane, World Adventurer Answers Last Great Call," op. cit.
- 26 "O'Kane's Life is Checkered," op. cit.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 "O'Kane, World Adventurer Answers Last Great Call," op. cit.
- 29 "O'Kane's Life is Checkered," op. cit.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 "O'Kane, World Adventurer Answers Last Great Call," op. cit.
- 32 Williams, op. cit., p. 38.
- 33 "O'Kane, World Adventurer Answers Last Great Call," op. cit.
- 34 "Tenants in Building are Up-to-Date," op. cit.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 "Tenants in Building are Up-to-Date," op. cit.
- 38 Gribikov, op. cit., p. 251.
- 39 "O'Kane Building Opening 40 years ago Recalled," op. cit.
- 40 "Tenants in Building are Up-to-Date," op. cit.
- 41 Grivikov, op. cit., p. 185.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet THE O'KANE BUILDING Item number 9 Page 1

Condit, Carl W. American Building: Materials and Techniques from the Beginning of the Colonial Settlements to the Present, Chicago and London: University Press, 1982.

Gribikov, Joyce. Pioneer Spirits of Bend, Bend, Oregon, Joyce Gribikov, 1980.

Weiss, Harry Moisseiff. Early Concrete Construction in Oregon, 1880-1915, Master of Science Thesis, University of Oregon Graduate School, 1983.

Williams, Elsie H. A Pictorial History of the Bend Country, Bend, Oregon: Elsie Horn Williams, 1983.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1969.

Withey, Henry F. & Elsie Rathburn Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles, New Age, 1956.

The Bend Bulletin

July 3, 1912
March 8, 1916
November 22, 1916
August 20, 1952
September 5, 1956

The Morning Oregonian

February 18, 1930 (obituary)

