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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Bennes, John Virginus and Annice, House
Other names/site number N/A

2. Location

Street & number 122 SW Marconi Avenue
City or town Portland
State Oregon Code OR County Multnomah Code 051 Zip code 97205

Not for publication
Vicinity

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

National statewide X local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date 1-29-13

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
Determined not eligible for the National Register
Other (explain:)
determined eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 3-27-13

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	Buildings
0	0	District
0	0	Site
0	0	Structure
0	0	Object
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Prairie School

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation: CONCRETE

Walls: STUCCO

Roof: TERRA COTTA

Other: N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The John Virginus Bennes House, located at 122 SW Marconi Avenue in the Arlington Heights neighborhood of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, was built in 1911 as the home of Oregon architect, John Virginus Bennes. The house is two stories with a basement and approximately 4,370 square feet in size. It was the first residence constructed in the Arlington Heights neighborhood, which is adjacent and within Washington Park. The house is designed in the Prairie School style with Mediterranean influences and exhibits the strong horizontal lines emphasized by broad, low-hanging eaves, which is characteristic of the style. The residence has a rectangular plan and a low-pitched hip roof, with the ridgeline perpendicular to the front lot line. It is a wood-frame building with a stucco finish, a tile roof, and a concrete foundation.

The front façade includes a partially enclosed porch on the first story and a band of vertically-oriented windows under the eaves on the second floor, which further emphasizes the horizontal lines of the building. The ornamental detailing of the house is restrained and honors craftsmanship as demonstrated by the ornamental frieze beneath the upper eave, the Prairie School-style planters anchoring several corners of the building and property, and the glass-and-metal overhang above the entryway. The interior of the house features an open floor plan of large rooms, as is characteristic of most styles of the early 20th century. The foyer is dominated by a dramatic yet simple central stair case and heavily articulated molding in a geometric pattern. The house has undergone minor alterations several times since its construction, including the addition and enclosure of a back porch into a breakfast room, addition of a detached garage, conversion to forced air heating system and remodeling of the kitchen and three bathrooms. However, the residence retains the distinctive influences of the Prairie School style, as well as its Mediterranean features, and is a strong representation of the architectural work of John Virginus Bennes.

Narrative Description

Setting

The John Virginus Bennes House was the first house constructed in the Arlington Heights neighborhood of Portland, Oregon. Arlington Heights is close to downtown Portland and located within and adjacent to the former City Park, now Washington Park, one of the oldest parks in the city. The Bennes House is within a small cluster of homes situated less than one-half mile from the main park entrance in the heart of Washington Park.¹ It is sited on the northern portion of its 0.11 acre lot adjacent to a detached double car garage to the south. A low Classical concrete balustrade capped in various corners with urns frames the front yard. An iron gate with geometric pattern lit by a Craftsman style light marks the entrance from the street. A concrete path on the south side of a small yard west of the house leads from SW Marconi to the front porch as well as the main, south entry, which overlooks a lower level yard to the south behind the garage. Another small yard exists to the rear of the house, on the east side.

Exterior

The Bennes House is two stories in height with a full basement level. The exterior walls are finished in stucco topped by a low-pitched, hipped, tile roof with deeply projecting, boxed eaves. The front façade faces west toward the street and is dominated by a centered bank of narrow, vertically-oriented windows with wide mullions and ornamented surrounds on the upper level, above a built-in planter box. Finely crafted, ornate

¹ Hawkins III, William J. and Willingham, William F. *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon 1850- 1950*. Timber Press, 1999, 378.

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brackets are located on either side of the upper story windows along with a decorative frieze placed directly beneath the eaves. The lower level comprises a half-width, recessed entry porch on the right and an enclosed portion on the left featuring eight-over-one-light windows covered by a hip-roof with deep eaves, continuing the horizontal emphasis of this façade. The porch is supported by paired, oversized, square columns and enclosed with a solid half-wall topped by a large urn.

The main entryway is located on the south side of the house and includes a large, curved, metal-and-glass canopy above the front door. The front door, as is common in Prairie School designs, is not visible from the front of the house. It is wood stained a natural oak color with a small window covered by a decorative grill and flanked by partial-height, multi-light sidelights. To the left of this centered entry at the lower level are paired, eight-over-one-light windows above a built-in planter box. At the second level are three, one-over-one-light art glass ribbon windows. To the right (east) of the main entry is a square bay with narrow, six-over-one-light windows and deep eaves, surmounted by a canted bay at the second level with one-over-one-light windows. Visible to the far east of this façade are the narrow windows of the sun room, which are surmounted by round-arched transom windows.

The east, rear façade includes the one-story sun room on the south side, which is accented by Tuscan columns at each corner, and features deep eaves with exposed rafter ends and tall narrow windows surmounted by round-arched, three-light, transom windows. The central canted bay on this façade features multi-light windows. To the right are six-over-one-light windows above a stair case to the basement level that terminates at a wall on the northeast corner of the house. At the second level is a double, multi-light, French door on the left (south) side with a Juliet balcony with turned balusters and a bank of multi-light casement windows to the right.

Tall art glass windows dominate the northern façade along with a one-story porch located off the kitchen on the main level. The terracotta frieze continues to wrap its way around the house beneath the eaves and a small concrete pathway follows the foundation towards the front yard.

Interior

The interior of the Bennes House is approximately 4,370 square feet in size and is comprised of two upper stories and a full lower basement level. The floor plan is open and rooms flow into one another. Natural light floods the interior as a result of the large number of windows as well as ornamental light fixtures that are located on the ceilings and walls of the house. Ornamental woodwork as well as built-in furniture and shelving is seen throughout the house.

Immediately through the front door lies the central foyer, which is dominated by a large staircase of wood finished in two wood-tone contrasting stains. The stair is enclosed with a low, wide, stepped wall. Tall casement windows with art glass in a geometric design light the landing and brighten the entry and the leaded glass accents at the base of the stair.

The living room is located through a large doorway on the left (west) side of the foyer. It displays stained wood paneling and is anchored by a large central fireplace finished in square tiles. The enclosed front porch is accessible through a glass door from the living room; opposite, to the north, lies a large built-in window seat beneath eight-over-one-light windows. Three floor-to-ceiling windows on the north side of the living room provide a strong focal point.

A large dining room located on the east side of the house includes wood paneling and a built-in shelf with a leaded glass door topped by a mirror. As is common throughout the house, the dining room is adorned with ornamental crown molding in a strong geometric design. A leaded glass chandelier provides light in addition to the casement windows located on the south side of the room.

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A glass-paned door located in the southeast corner of the dining room leads to an enclosed sunken sun porch. The floor of the sun porch is finished in red tiles and floor-to-ceiling casement windows wrap all the way from the south wall to the east wall of the room.

A breakfast nook is accessible from a glass-paned door located on the north side of the sun porch, as well as through another glass-paned door off the dining room. The breakfast nook contains a built-in window seat and shelves, as well as a cluster of casement windows. The nook flows into the kitchen area, which can also be entered through the dining room. A door with a window provides access to a small service porch immediately beyond the north kitchen wall. A small powder room is located next to the staircase down several steps.

Adjacent to the kitchen and also through a large heavy door of wood and leaded glass off the north end of the foyer lies a small, dark-paneled wood library with numerous built-in shelves. The library also contains a wood-paneled door, which marks the entrance to the lower basement level.

The stairs to the lower level basement level are a natural stained wood and uncommonly wide in depth and length for a basement. At the base of the stairs are more built in-shelves of darkly stained wood, which matches the expansive paneling of the game room through the doorway east of the base of the staircase. The pool room boasts high ceilings and a massive fireplace comprised of dark wood and decorative tile. Numerous windows provide light to the basement area.

On the east side of the game room are several utility-type rooms around that room that was once the location of the original commercial-grade boiler for the house. One of the smaller rooms was used for sawdust storage to feed the boiler. A bedroom with adjacent bathroom is located at the western end of the utility rooms. The bedroom includes original wall fixtures which provide dim lighting. Penny tiles and a claw-foot tub are located in the bathroom. The east side of the lower level also provides numerous closets and storage as well as access to the backyard.

The additional three bedrooms of the house are located on the top floor accessible via the central stair. Like the rest of the house, the hallways and rooms contain numerous built-in shelves and closets, as well as expansive wood-work, the majority of which is painted. One full wall of the master bedroom, located at the west end of the top floor, contains built-in drawers and shelves along with a mirror. A fireplace containing a metal hearth screen matches and continues the built-in wood work. Ribbon windows line both the west and south wall of the master bedroom; the west windows features art glass, as does the window in the bathroom off the master bedroom, located through a heavy leaded glass door.

Matching heavy glass doors provide two points of entry to an additional bathroom on the second floor, which also contains an art-glass casement window. The bathroom is accessible from the center hall of the top story as well as through an adjacent bedroom that includes a Juliet balcony on the east wall. Another bedroom is located at the northeast corner of the top floor and contains additional built-in shelving and storage.

Alterations and Additions

During John V. Bennes' period of ownership, the residence underwent several alterations. Pursuant to the permit dated April 14, 1919 (permit # 74211) granted to John Bennes, a 10x10 foot concrete foundation and plaster wall on the east end of the house was added for the present breakfast room. Bennes also enclosed the southeast corner porch for a sunroom. It is also noted that he repaired his house on October 22, 1927, however, the nature of the repairs was not noted (permit # 187617). The *Historic Resource Inventory* states the repairs in 1927 included the addition of second story bay windows.

Following ownership by Bennes, in approximately 1944, a detached two-car garage with a basement was constructed at the property line. It is finished in stucco with a roof of the same low pitch and tile cladding as the main house.

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Between 2007 to 2010, the residence was further renovated. Specifically, on the main floor, the kitchen was expanded into space occupied by a pantry and second staircase. New cabinetry, countertops, and two light fixtures were installed. The doorway between the dining room and kitchen was enlarged. Extension and repair of the hardwood floors was done with salvaged wood from a public school gymnasium to match the existing floor and the moldings were extended to fit the new door frame by matching the original. The powder room was re-tiled in marble and a new sink, toilet, and fixtures were installed.

The basement boiler was removed and replaced with a forced-air heating and air-conditioning system. The concrete floor of the boiler room was covered with hardwood and the adjacent laundry room was re-tiled.

Renovations to the upper floor included re-tiling and installing new fixtures in both bathrooms. A new interior wall was added to the master bedroom to create a walk-in closet as well.

The exterior front wall was replaced due to wear with a replica and planters were repaired. A mold of the non-damaged portion of the original front wall was cast and used to re-cast the new in concrete similar in appearance and color as the original. The original wood front door was retained.

The major alterations to the Bennes house that affect the exterior appearance, including the sun room, breakfast nook, and bay windows, were made by Bennes himself and are over 50 years old. They may be said to have acquired significance in themselves. Subsequent changes by other owners are relatively minor and mainly affect interior finishes and fixtures. Reconstruction of the front, west façade involved primarily replacement in kind, and was undertaken for maintenance purposes. The house retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The craftsmanship exhibited in the residence's many special features, including leaded glass, art glass, and paneled walls, is particularly noteworthy. The setting of the house has changed since the time it was the first house in the neighborhood. The house retains a high level of integrity dating from its Period of Significance, which ends with Bennes' death in 1943.

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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.

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, objects, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years old or achieving significance Within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911 - 1943

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

John Virginus Bennes

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

John Virginus Bennes

Period of Significance (justification)

1911, completion of construction; 1943, date Bennes sold house.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The John Virginius Bennes House, located in the Arlington Heights neighborhood of Portland, Oregon, is significant under National Register Criterion C as a remarkable example of a mix of Mediterranean and Prairie School style of architecture, which is said to be the first original American architectural style. The house embodies the Prairie Style through its strong horizontal lines, stucco finish, low pitched hip roof, and open floor plan. The house also qualifies for listing under National Register Criterion B, as it was the personal home of John Virginius Bennes, a highly regarded Oregon architect who has been credited with introducing the Prairie School style to Portland, but also designed numerous buildings in Oregon that are listed on the National Register, including the Hollywood Theater and the nearly 50 buildings and complexes in the Oregon State University National Register Historic District.² Bennes designed and completed the house in 1911 and lived there until a few months prior to his death in 1943, which is the Period of Significance for the home.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The John Virginius Bennes House is an excellent example of mixed Mediterranean and Prairie School style architecture, which was pioneered by famed architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Prairie School design is seen as both an architectural style and aesthetic movement. Prairie School homes, with their characteristic strong lines, boxy forms, open flowing floor plans, and relatively subdued detailing, contrasted with the Victorian style of architecture popular in late 19th and early 20th century; which focused on complex forms, numerous small rooms, and ornate detailing. As noted by Portland architectural historians William Hawkins and William Willingham, the work of Bennes and his partners was among "...the most avant-garde architecture to be seen in Portland" at the time that Bennes was designing his own home: "Such radical departure in Portland, however, caused little stir, despite the great inventiveness for the period and the promising possibilities of an entirely new aesthetic."³

Prairie School style buildings are relatively rare in Oregon. The *Prairie School Traveler* website lists 15 homes, including the John Bennes House, as exhibiting the Prairie School style in Portland, Oregon.⁴ Of such 15 homes, six are located in the southwest area of Portland. The Bennes House, along with the Aaron Maegly House, are the only two listed Prairie School style homes located in the Arlington Heights neighborhood and both were designed by Bennes, who is credited with introducing the Prairie School style to Portland.⁵

The Maegly House was completed in 1915, four years after the John Bennes House became the first home completed in Arlington Heights. The Bennes and Maegly houses are similar in structure, both showcasing the strong horizontal lines and organic focus of the Prairie School style. The two homes also have broad tiled roofs; however, the Maegly House incorporates more Mediterranean influences in its ornate and somewhat flowery frieze work and detailing. Architectural historian Gideon Bosker has noted that, "The Bennes house, which is many ways was a precursor for the more ostentatious Maegly home, revealed the architect's desire for order and abstracted shapes."⁶ The John Bennes House adheres more closely to the simple lines and ornamentation of traditional Prairie School Design, except for the "unusual... addition of brackets which appear to add support to the widely extended eaves."⁷

² Note that Bennes' had several places of business during his career in Portland, likely reflecting the fact that over the course of his career he worked alone and in partnership with various parties. None are known to be designed by him (*personal communication, Larry Landis, August 2012*).

³ William J. Hawkins III and William F. Willingham, *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon 1850 – 1950*. (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1999), 372.

⁴ *Prairie School Traveler*, <http://www.prairieschooltraveler.com/html/or/or.html>. Note that the A.H. Maegly house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

⁵ Bosker, Gideon and Lena Lencek. *Frozen Music, A History of Portland Architecture*. Oregon Historical Society Pr., 1985, 59.

⁶ Bosker, *Frozen Music*, 59.

⁷ Hawkins III, William J. and Willingham, William F. *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon 1850- 1950*. Timber Press, 1999, 372. Note also that the Maegly home was reported to cost \$40,000 to build in 1914, with another \$10,000 to \$20,000 to be added in furnishings,

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The personal residence Bennes designed for himself within Washington Park in Portland, Oregon embodies both Bennes' immense talent as well as his appreciation for Prairie School design. The house boldly represents the Prairie School style through its stucco exterior, low-pitched tiled roof, broad overhanging eaves, ribbons of plentiful windows, and restrained use of ornament. The interior boasts the open floor plan and dominant central chimney associated with Prairie School design, along with art glass, built-in furniture, and simple yet finely crafted woodwork and moldings. Where Bennes' personal interpretation of the Prairie School style can be seen, in his Prairie School residences as well as other work, is the incorporation of highly articulated friezes and brackets on otherwise relatively simple volumes with a restrained expression.⁸

Construction of the Bennes House was completed in 1911 and the Bennes family lived in the home until a few months prior to his death in 1943.⁹ Bennes moved to Portland in 1906 after working on several projects in Baker, Oregon. While living in Portland, Bennes designed numerous historically and architecturally notable buildings, many of which are listed on the National Register. Some of Bennes' most notable works include the Hotel Cornelius, the Hollywood Theater, Oregon State University buildings within the Oregon State University Historic District, Temple Beth Israel, and the A.H. Maegly House.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

John Virginus Bennes, Architect

John Virginus Bennes was born August 23, 1867, one of five brothers born to John Virginus Bennes of Illinois.¹⁰ According to the *Oregon Journal*, Bennes was born in Peru, Illinois while *The Architects of Oregon*, states his birthplace as Bohemia, now part of Czechoslovakia.¹¹ Regardless of his birthplace, Bennes grew up in Chicago, Illinois, where he received a Chicago Public School education. According to his American Institute of Architects membership application, he also studied architecture at Prague University.¹² However, he also appears to have trained in Chicago.¹³ Despite the uncertainty, his later work demonstrates that he was greatly influenced by Chicago's Frank Lloyd Wright and John V. Bennes remains widely considered "a product of the Chicago school of architecture."¹⁴

In approximately 1899, Bennes married Annice Smalley of Hoopeston, Illinois and shortly thereafter the couple relocated to Baker City, Oregon. While many have hypothesized that gold mining brought Bennes to Oregon, the reason remains undocumented. Nonetheless, Bennes opened an architectural office in Baker City and designed numerous projects during his stay, including the extensive redesign of the Geiser Grand Hotel (1900), the Charles A. Johns house (1903), Baker City Hall, and the Elks Lodge (1905). His only son, John B. Bennes, was born during his stay in Baker City in 1902.

while Bennes' home was valued at \$15,000 in 1912. ("2 Beautiful Homes Best Built in Year," *The Morning Oregonian*; "The Zoo Defendant in Suit for Damage," *The Morning Oregonian*, 25 April 1912:22.

⁸ Note that this restraint is not seen in the Maegly house, but it appears often in his larger body of work, including the OSU campus buildings with their pronounced entablatures to believe that this is his preferred aesthetic.

⁹ Bennes worked until shortly before his death. His last building on the OSU campus was constructed in 1941.

¹⁰ John Bennes' father spelled his name with one "n". Personal communication, Larry Landis, August 2012.

¹¹ Ritz, Richard Ellison. *Architects of Oregon*. Lair Hill Publishing, 2002, 36. Note that 1920 census records and Bennes' application for membership in the American Institute of Architects both state that he was born in Illinois, but that both parents were from Bohemia.

¹² According to one source, he received his education at the School of Fine Arts in Prague through a relative's connections, and at the University of Chicago (Gordon B. Dodds, *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form*, March 15, 1985, Item 8, Page 3).

¹³ Bart King, *An Architectural Guidebook to Portland*. Oregon State University Press, 2007, 270. Note that both Bennes and his father John V. Benes were listed in the Chicago directory as architects and the younger Bennes belonged to the Chicago Architectural Club (Larry Landis, lecture on John Virginus Bennes, Mission Theater, 6 August 2012).

¹⁴ Larry Landis, "Church's Building Well Worth Preserving," *Gazette-Times*, Feb. 1, 2001

<http://members.peak.org/~garyc/personal/news/gfgt020101.htm>.

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In 1906, Bennes moved his family to Portland, where he would live until a few months prior to his death in 1943. During his 37 years of practice in Portland, John Virginius Bennes designed many houses and commercial buildings. Throughout his career, Bennes worked as a solo practitioner as well as practicing with the following firms that also bore his name:

1906 – 1910	Bennes, Hendricks, and Tobey (Eric W. Hendricks and Willard F. Tobey)
1910 – 1911	Bennes, Hendricks, and Thompson (Lewis Irvine Thompson)
1911 – 1914	Bennes and Hendricks
1914 – 1925	Bennes (independent)
1925 – 1931	Bennes and Herzog (Harry A. Herzog)
1931 – 1943	Bennes (independent)

Bennes designed and built his house five years after his arrival in Portland. He was well established as an architect by this time, however, having designed eight buildings on the Oregon State College (University today) campus¹⁵ and undertaken nearly twenty commercial and residential commissions in Portland alone.¹⁶

Bennes, on his own and as part of other architectural firms, all of which bore his name, designed 173 known projects,¹⁷ including twenty buildings that are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and nearly fifty projects on the Oregon State University campus.¹⁸ Residences in Portland that are individually listed in the National Register include the Coleman-Scott House (bungalow); the William Bittles Wells House (Craftsman); the Abraham Tichner House (Craftsman); the A.H. Maegly House (Prairie Style); and the L.B. Menefee House (Tudor Revival).

Like many of the most talented architects of his time, Bennes was proficient in a number of architectural styles. He designed residences in the Portland area in the Craftsman, Tudor Revival, English Cottage, Spanish, and Mediterranean Revival styles. He remains most closely associated, however, with the Prairie School style, perhaps because the homes he designed in the style are so highly regarded. Architectural historians William Hawkins and William Willingham have called the Aaron H. Maegly house, designed by Bennes in 1914 and perhaps his most well-known residence, a 'unique' and 'compelling' house that "...clearly demonstrated his mastery of architecture form."¹⁹ They continue: "The exceptional Prairie Style plan, the wonderful sculpture of the house, and the fine interior and exterior details rank this house not only as architect Bennes' finest work, but as an eminent example of residential architecture in the city."²⁰

Bennes was also proficient in a staggering number of building types. In addition to over thirty known residences, he designed numerous hotels, other commercial buildings including restaurants and retail stores, apartment buildings, churches, fraternal organization buildings, a theater, industrial buildings, agricultural buildings, military buildings, and a wide range of educational buildings. In addition to his seminal work on the Oregon State University campus, he designed buildings for Western Oregon University and Eastern Oregon University. In particular his work for Oregon State University exposed him to a wide variety of building types and challenging building projects.

¹⁵ Peter R. Meijer, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form – Oregon State University Historic District, April 2008.

¹⁶ Oregon Historical Sites Database, <http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/index.cfm?do=v.dsp_main> accessed August 2012.

¹⁷ Larry Landis, lecture on John Virginius Bennes, Mission Theater, 6 August 2012.

¹⁸ Oregon Historical Sites Database, <http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/index.cfm?do=v.dsp_main> accessed August 2012.

¹⁹ William J. Hawkins, III, and William F. Willingham, *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon 1850-1950* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1999), 381.

²⁰ Hawkins, *Classic Houses*, 384.

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John Bennes is perhaps best known as the architect for Oregon State University in the years from 1907 to 1942, when he designed nearly 50 properties for the University campus.²¹ In fact, the Oregon State University National Register Historic District is nominated, in part, for its association with architect Bennes. Although many of his buildings on the campus have been lost over time, 24 of the 59 contributing buildings on the campus today were designed by Bennes, and the campus as a whole is closely associated with his influence.²² The red brick of the buildings, with their stone or terra cotta trim, and subdued classical motifs, unify the campus and distinguish it from many other public college campuses, particularly land-grant college campuses that developed over a long time frame. In addition to meeting the University's building challenges over the years, Bennes was charged with meeting the guidelines stipulated in the Olmsted plan for the University and later master plans by A.D. Taylor, including guidelines for grouping and orienting buildings toward public spaces, defining building approaches, and achieving "architectural harmony."²³

Bennes was a prolific, versatile, and highly regarded architect, having designed nearly 175 known properties in the course of his career in the Pacific Northwest.²⁴ His design portfolio includes a variety of styles, including Mediterranean Revival, Colonial Revival, and Classical Revival buildings, as well as Prairie School style residences, many of which have been recognized as significant and placed in the National Registry of Historic Places. John Virginius Bennes, through his partnerships, design work, and leadership in the Oregon Chapter of the AIA and Oregon State Board of Architect Examiners, played a critical role in establishing the architectural heritage, including the Prairie School style, of Portland, Oregon and surrounding cities.²⁵

Conclusion

The John Virginius and Annice Bennes House was the first house built in the Arlington Heights neighborhood of Portland, Oregon and the personal home of prolific Oregon architect John Virginius Bennes for 32 years, representing the most significant years of his long career. The house is an excellent example of the Prairie School style of architecture, exemplifying his work in this genre. The Bennes home is not his most well-known work, which is clearly the Maegly house. But, it is undoubtedly the best representation of his personal aesthetic, as the house he designed for himself and his family.²⁶ Therefore, the John Virginius and Annice Bennes house is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B, for its association with the architectural genius of John Virginius Bennes, and under Criterion C, as an excellent representation of the Prairie School style of residential design in Portland.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Books and Articles

Bosker, Gideon and Lena Lencek. *Frozen Music, A History of Portland Architecture*. Oregon Historical Society Pr., 1985.

Clark, Rosalind. *Oregon Style, Architecture from 1840 to the 1950s*. Professional Book Center, 1983.

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Hawkins III, William J. and Willingham, William F. *Classic Houses of Portland, Oregon 1850- 1950*. Timber Press, 1999.

²¹ Meijer, 2008, Section 8, Page 1.

²² Landis

²³ Peter R. Meijer, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form – Oregon State University Historic District*, April 2008.

²⁴ Landis, August 16, 2012.

²⁵ Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, 37.

²⁶ The four Prairie School style homes by John V. Bennes listed in the Oregon Historical Sites Database are the Marcus J. Delahunt House (1909); the John Virginius and Annice Bennes House (1911); and the Inham and Dora B. Smith House (1911); and the A.H. Maegly House (1914).

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House
Name of Property

Multnomah County, OR
County and State

King, Bart. *An Architectural Guidebook to Portland*. Oregon State University Press, 2007.

Nelson, Donald R. *Portland's Washington Park: A Pictorial History*. Donald Nelson, 2010.

Obituary of John V. Bennes, *Oregonian* (Portland, OR), November 30, 1943.

Obituary of Mrs. John V. Bennes, *Oregonian* (Portland, OR), April 19, 1953.

Ritz, Richard Ellison. *Architects of Oregon*. Lair Hill Publishing, 2002.

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Landis, Larry. "Portland's "Versatile Stylist": The Architectural Legacy of John V. Bennes. Lecture. Architectural Heritage Center, Portland. Mar. 6, 2010. *Scholar's Archive @ OSU*. OSU Libraries. Web. <<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/handle/1957/14854>>.

"Oregon Encyclopedia - Oregon History and Culture." *Oregon Encyclopedia - Oregon History and Culture*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 May 2012. <<http://oregonencyclopedia.org/>>.

Oregon Historical Sites Database, http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/index.cfm?do=v.desp_main, accessed August 2012.

Other Resources

American Institutes of Architects, Application for Membership, John V. Bennes, November 17, 1916.

City of Portland. Buildings Bureau, files and plumbing inspection records.

City of Portland, Buildings Bureau, microfiche and card files.

Dodds, Gordon B., *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form*, March 15, 1985, Item 8, Page 3.

Larry Landis, lecture entitled "Oregon's Versatile Stylist: The Architectural Legacy of John V. Bennes," The Oregon Encyclopedia sponsored lecture at McMenamins Mission Theater, 6 August 2012.

Multnomah County Tax Assessor records, microform, automated data files and card files.

Oregon Historical Sites Database, http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/index.cfm?do=v.desp_main, accessed August 2012.

Oregon Historical Society, Vertical Files.

Meijer, Peter R., *National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form – Oregon State University Historic District*, April 2008.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Portland, Oregon.

U.S. Census, 1920.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
 Previously listed in the National Register
 Previously determined eligible by the National Register
 Designated a National Historic Landmark
 Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 Recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House
Name of Property

Multnomah County, OR
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.11
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	10T	523038mE	5041085mN	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The John Virginius Bennes House is situated on Lot 14, block 1; the north 1/2 of Lot 15, block 1, PARKSIDE, in the City of Portland, County of Multnomah, State of Oregon.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated parcel encompasses the tax lots that were originally owned by the architect, John Virginius Bennes and his wife, Annice. The boundary corresponds to the historic boundary of the property. The nominated area includes the residence, grounds, and detached garage.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Shannon McWhinney
Organization N/A Date June 15, 2012
Street & number 2762 NW Quimby Street Telephone 310-508-9828
City or town Portland State OR Zip code 97210
E-mail smcwhinn@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House

Name of Property
Multnomah County, OR
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 2

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

(Follow similar guidelines for entering the lat/long coordinates as describe on page 55, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* for entering UTM references. For properties less than 10 acres, enter the lat/long coordinates for a point corresponding to the center of the property. For properties of 10 or more acres, enter three or more points that correspond to the vertices of a polygon drawn on the map. The polygon should approximately encompass the area to be registered. Add additional points below, if necessary.)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 45.522918 Longitude: -122.705000

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House
Name of Property

Multnomah County, OR
County and State

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: John Virginius Bennes House
City or Vicinity: Portland
County: Multnomah **State:** OR
Photographer: Donna Howell McWhinney
Date Photographed: January - March 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- Photo 1 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0001)
Front (west) and south side facades of house and garage, looking northeast
- Photo 2 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0002)
Front (west) and south side facades, viewed from SW Marconi
- Photo 3 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0003)
Main entry, south façade, looking northeast
- Photo 4 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0004)
South, side façade, west end, looking north
- Photo 5 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0005)
Southwest corner of building, looking northwest (Sun room)
- Photo 6 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0006)
South side façade, east end, looking north
- Photo 7 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0007)
North side façade, west end, looking east
- Photo 8 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0008)
Exterior detail under eaves, second story, southwest corner
- Photo 9 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0009)
Interior, main stairwell at foyer, looking northwest
- Photo 10 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0010)
Passage from foyer to library, looking north
- Photo 11 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0011)
Living room fireplace, looking southeast
- Photo 12 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0012)
Built-ins within window seat, west of living room, looking north
- Photo 13 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0013)
Doors to front porch off living room, looking west
- Photo 14 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0014)
Dining room, looking east

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House
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- Photo 15 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0015)
Dining room built-in, looking southeast
- Photo 16 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0016)
Nook, looking southeast
- Photo 17 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0017)
Stained glass windows on main stair landing, looking north
- Photo 18 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0018)
Basement (Game room) fireplace, looking east
- Photo 19 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0019)
Basement bathroom, looking east
- Photo 20 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0020)
Living room, molding detail
- Photo 21 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnVirginiusHouse_0021)
Foyer, molding detail
- Photo 22 of 22** (OR_MultnomahCounty_BennesJohnandAnniceHouse_0022)
Front yard with fence and gate to SW Marconi, looking west

Property Owner: (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Donna Howell McWhinney

Street & number 122 SW Marconi Avenue Telephone 310-713-5853

City or town Portland State OR Zip code 97205

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 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Bennes, John Virginius and Annice, House

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LIST OF FIGURES

1. **General location map**
2. **Tax lot map**
3. **Site plan**
4. **Floor plan, main level**
5. **Floor plan, upper level**
6. **Floor plan, basement**
7. **Plat map for Parkside Addition**
8. **Aaron H. Maegly House, 1917**
9. **Photograph of elk grazing south of John V. Bennes house, ca 1912**
10. **Building permit for breakfast room addition, 1919**
11. **Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing Bennes house, 1924**
12. **Historic photograph of Bennes house (n.d.)**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Bennes, John Virginus and Annice, House

Name of Property

Multnomah, OR

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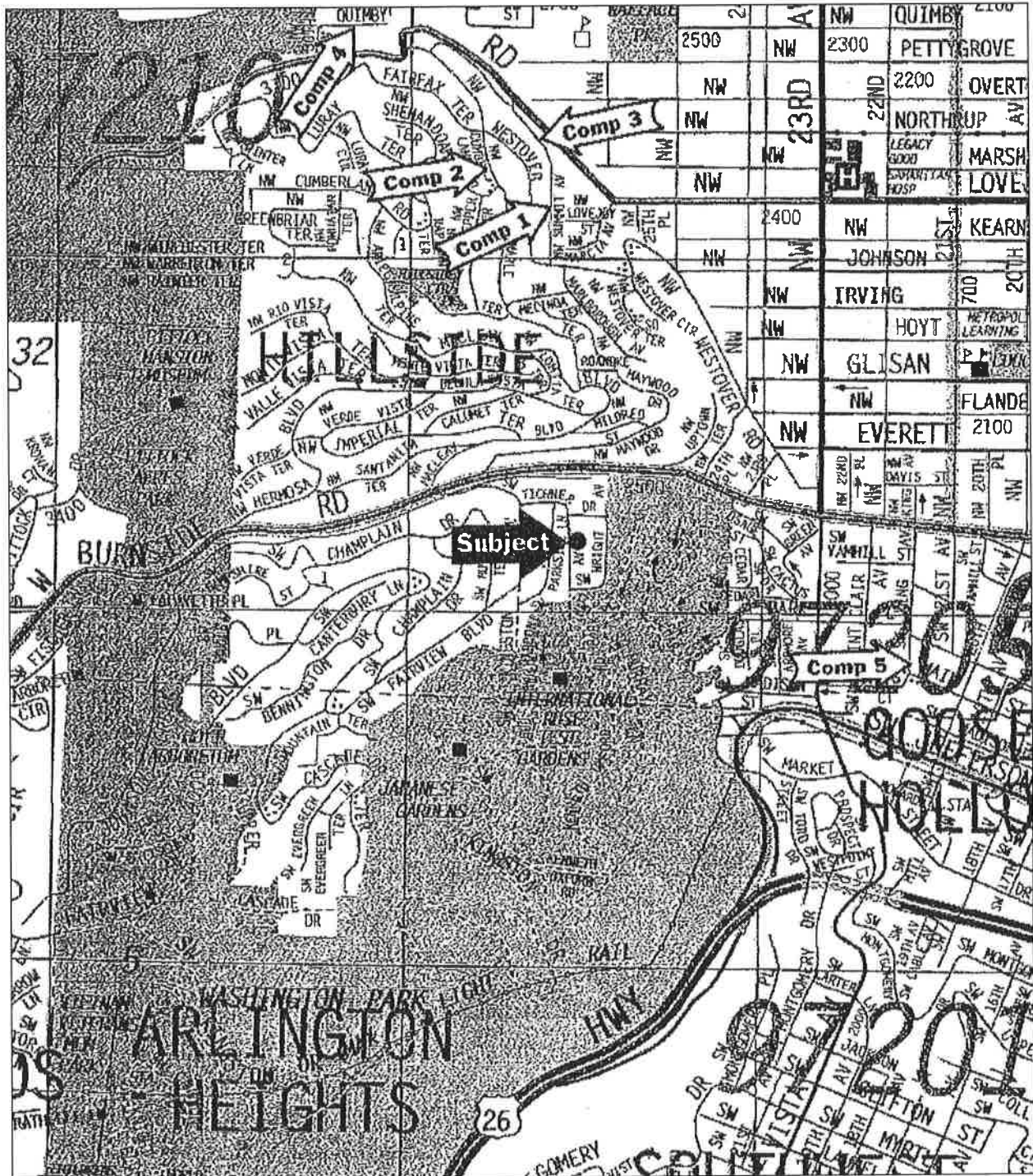
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Figure 1. General location map



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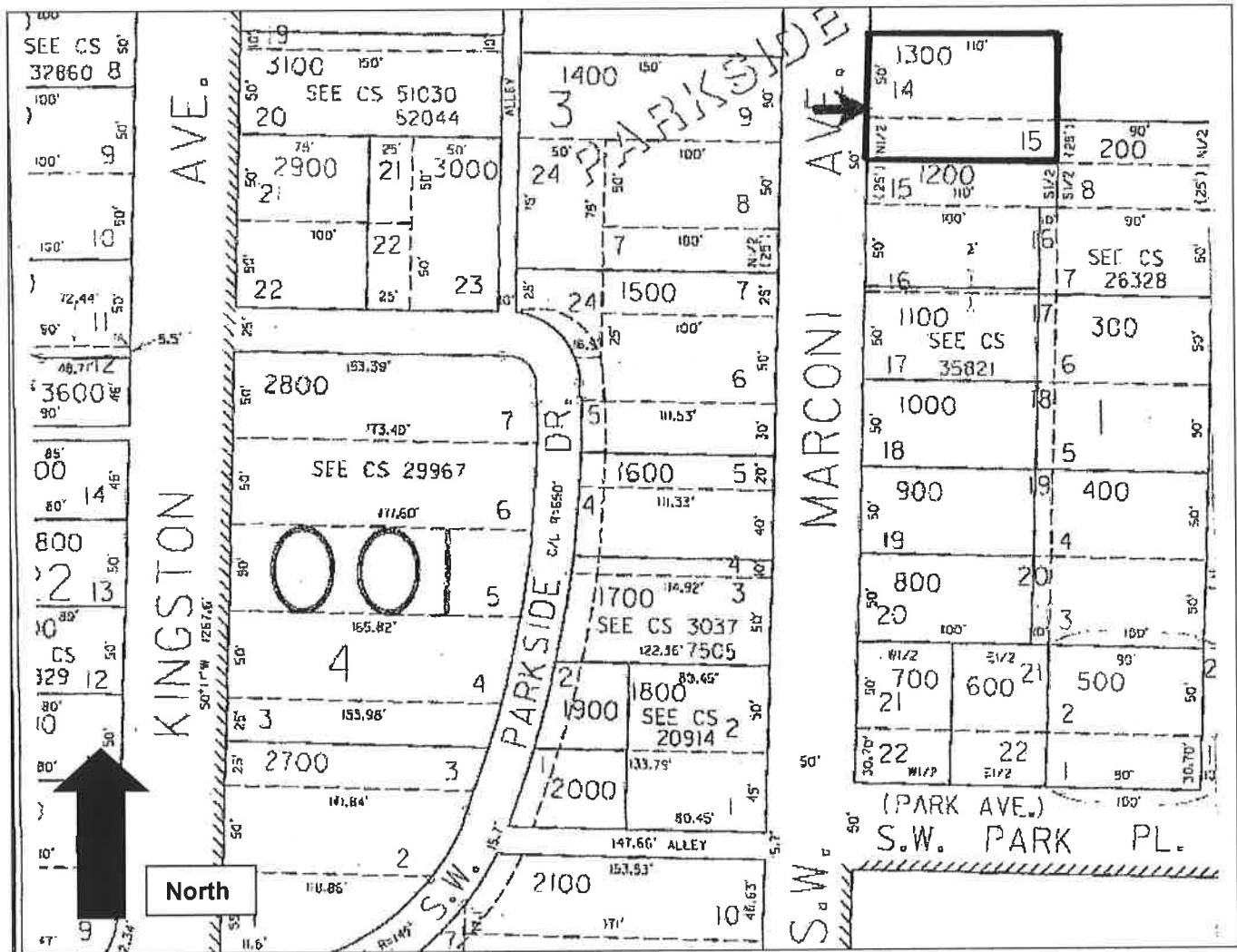
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 2. Tax lot map



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Figure 3. Site plan



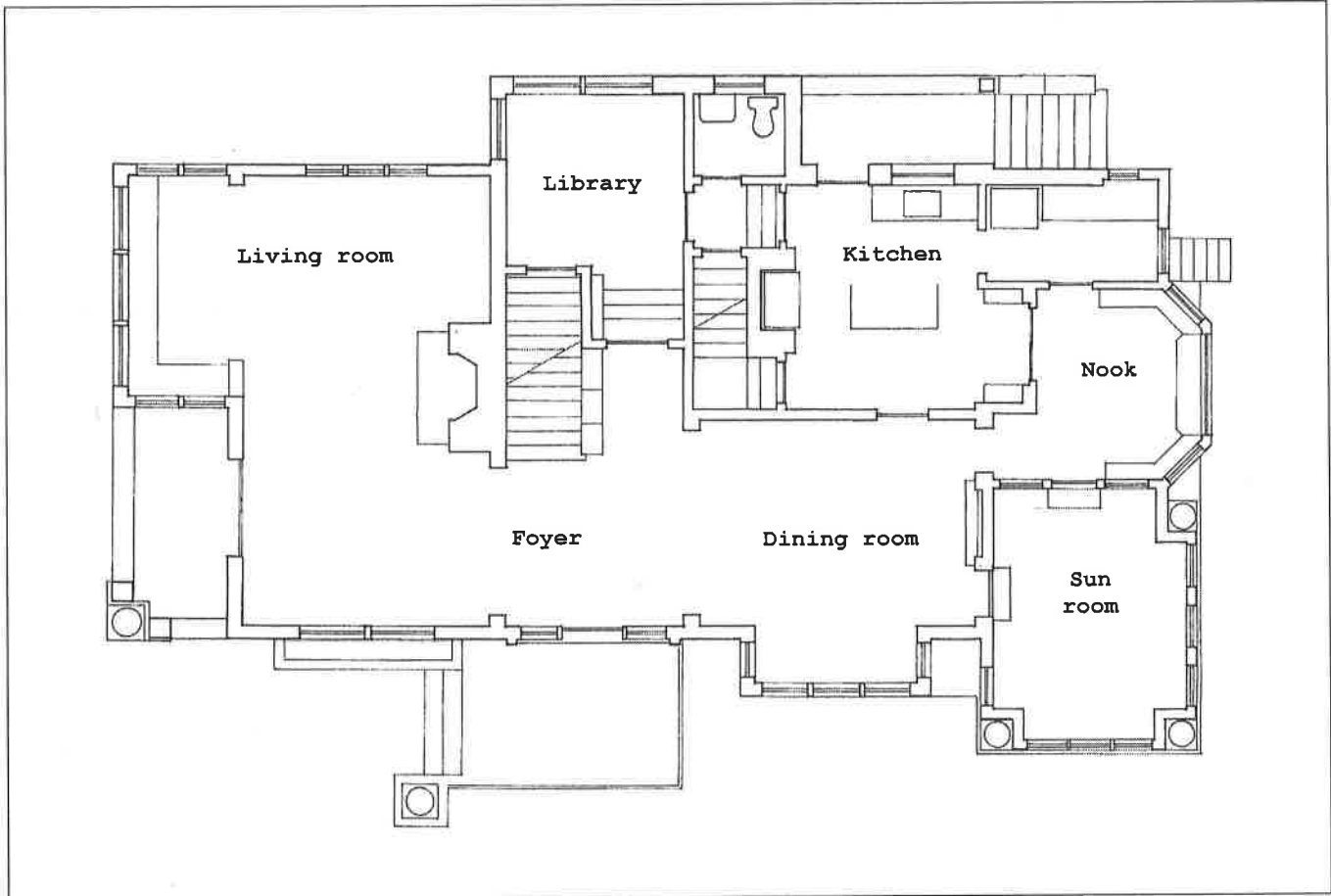
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Figure 4. Floor plan, main level



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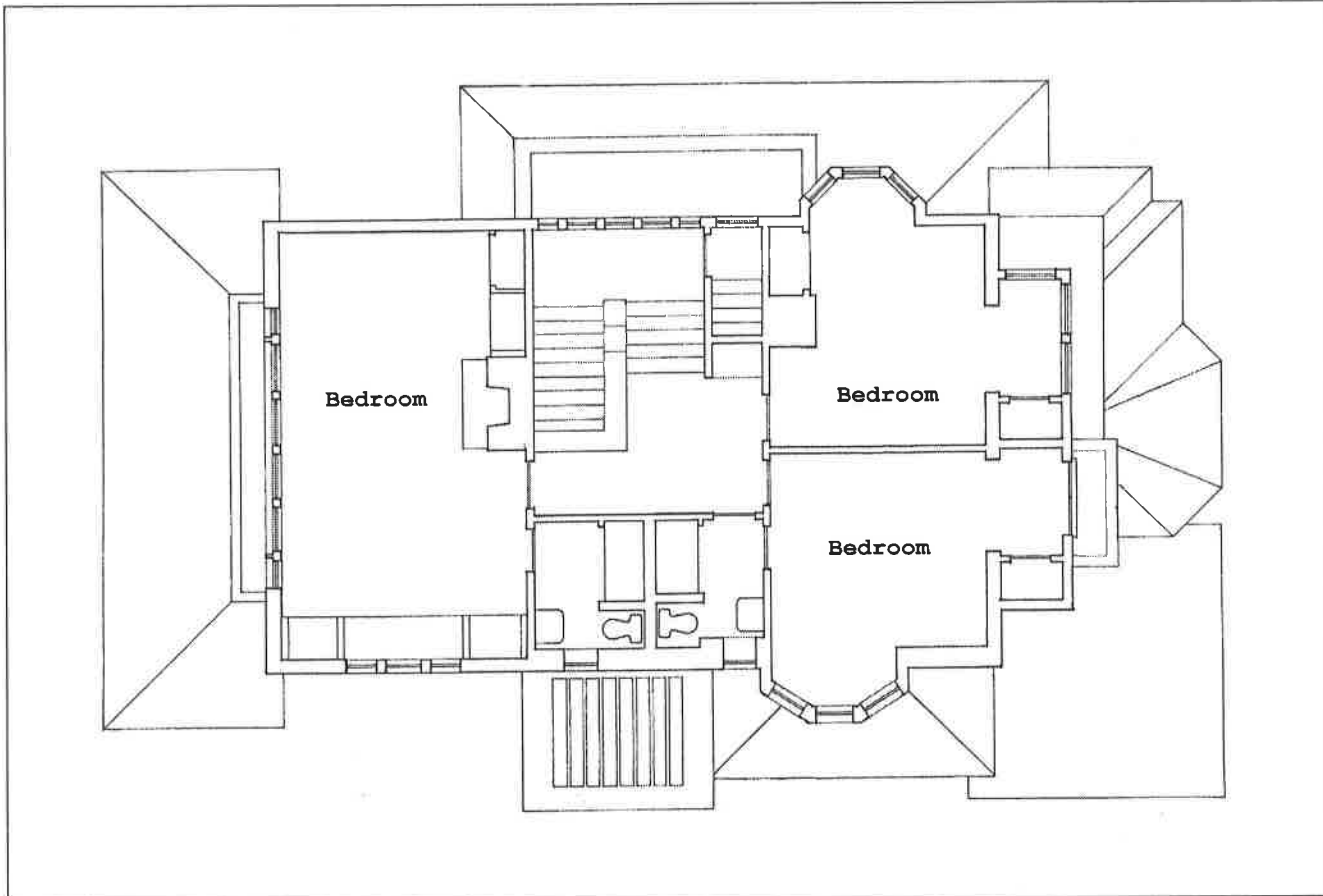
County and State

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Figure 5. Floor plan, upper level



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National Park Service

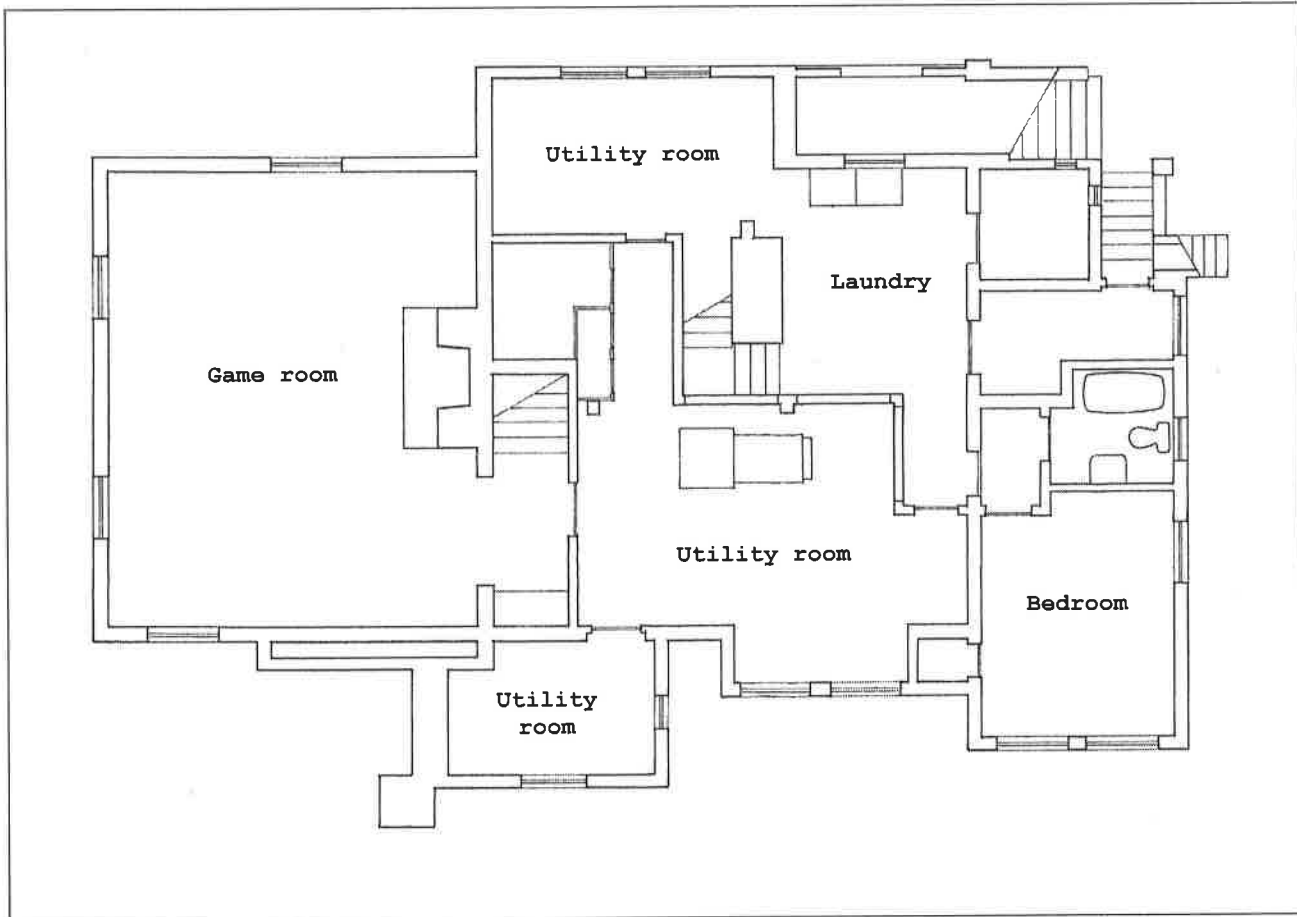
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Figure 6. Floor plan, basement



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Figure 7: Aaron H. Maegly House, 1917



Courtesy Jack Bookwalter



Courtesy Jack Bookwalter

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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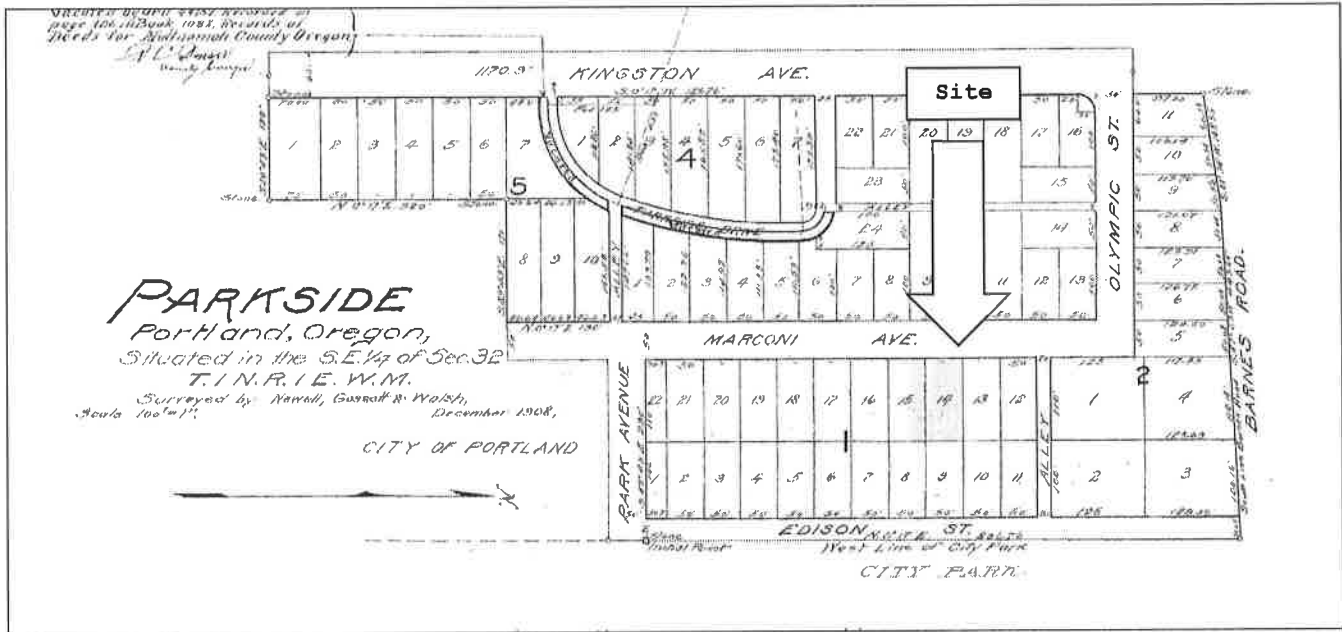
County and State

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Figure 8. Plat map for Parkside Addition



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Figure 9. Photograph of elk grazing south of John V. Bennes house, ca 1912

Elk

There was a mix of civilization and wild beast as indicated in the above photo showing the north boundary of the Elk area of the zoo.

As Arlington Heights (west of the zoo) was being developed, increased tensions caused by the noise of the animals were made known in neighboring areas.

In 1914, the zoo's herd of elk was increased by the addition of six elk, four male and two female that came to the Washington Park Zoo from Yellowstone National Park.

Wm. Fowler Photo

Elk, John V. Bennes residence in background, circa 1912, NFA

Source: *Portland's Washington Park: A Pictorial History*

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Figure 10. Building permit for breakfast room addition, 1919

FORM W-206
Date: April 16, 1919 REPORT OF INSPECTION
Building on: 14 Marconi Between Park and Wheeler Ave.
Lot Block in Block Addition
Owner: John V. Bennes Address: Above 13.
Contractor: " Address: "
Alter and Repair: " Story Frame: Residence Cell: 350.10

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS

Addition 1919 for breakfast room - concrete foundation - 2x4 studs metal lath plaster - lath & plaster inside - finish scrub into breakfast room.

STREET NO.	OWNER	REMARKS	DATE	PERMIT NO.
14	John V. Bennes	Rep. res.	4/16/19	74211
171	John R. Holman	Residence	6/26	76273
167	John R. Holman	Garage	11/4	79611
159	E. J. Lyons	Dr. Car	3/12	82287
205	H. E. Noble	Residence	4/15/22	90006
156	A. H. Allen	Residence	3/16/22	110614
174	K. Roald	Residence	1/28/24	135015
193	Geo. Donald	er com. sta	6-3-26	180516
193	Geo. Donald	er res	9-1-26	173942
193	John Bennes	er ret wall	10-21-26	173628
157	W.A. Tyler	residence.	4-4-29	200743
176	W.A. Tyler	residence.	6-6-31	214037

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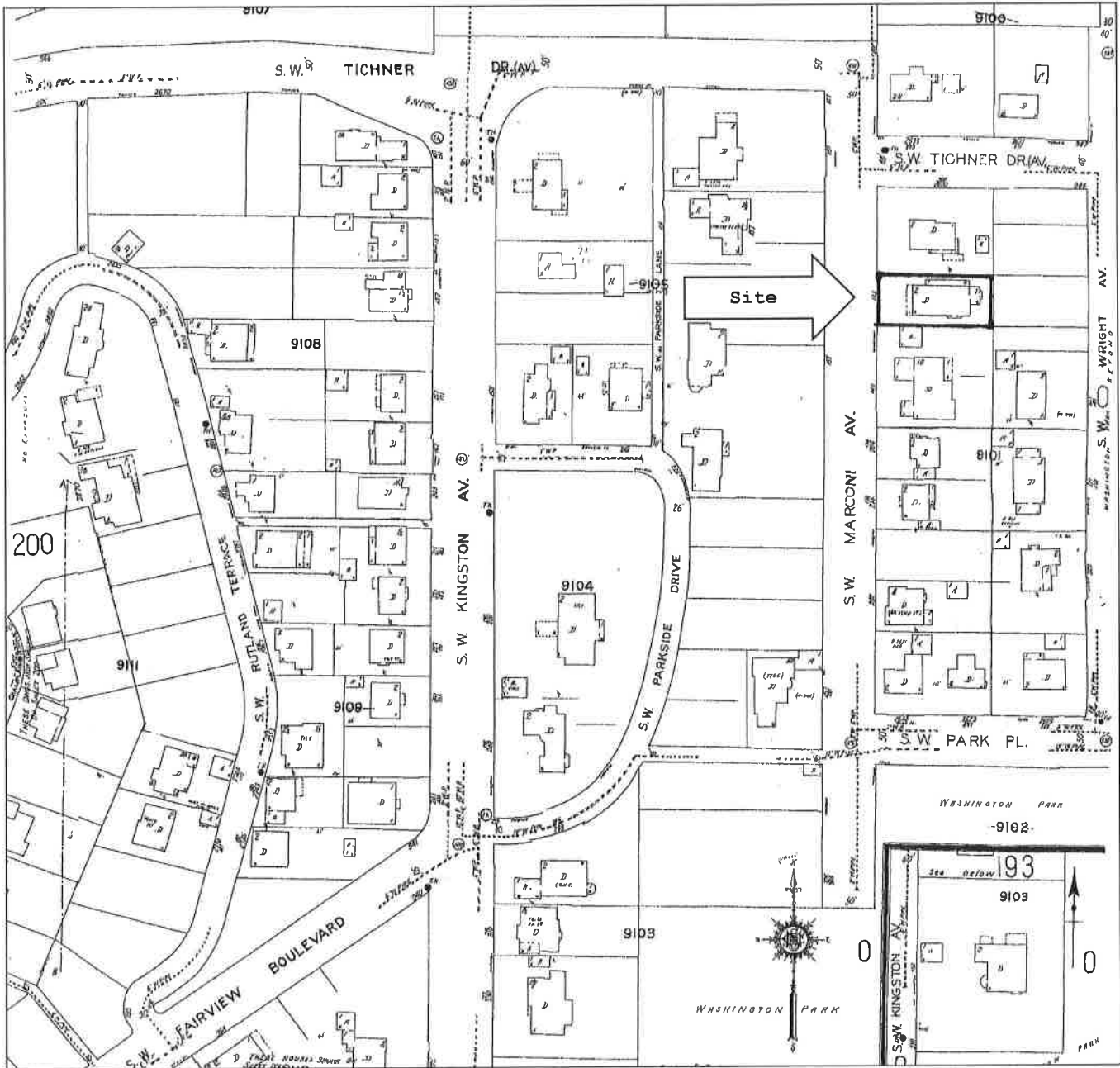
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 11. Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing Bennes house, 1924



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National Park Service

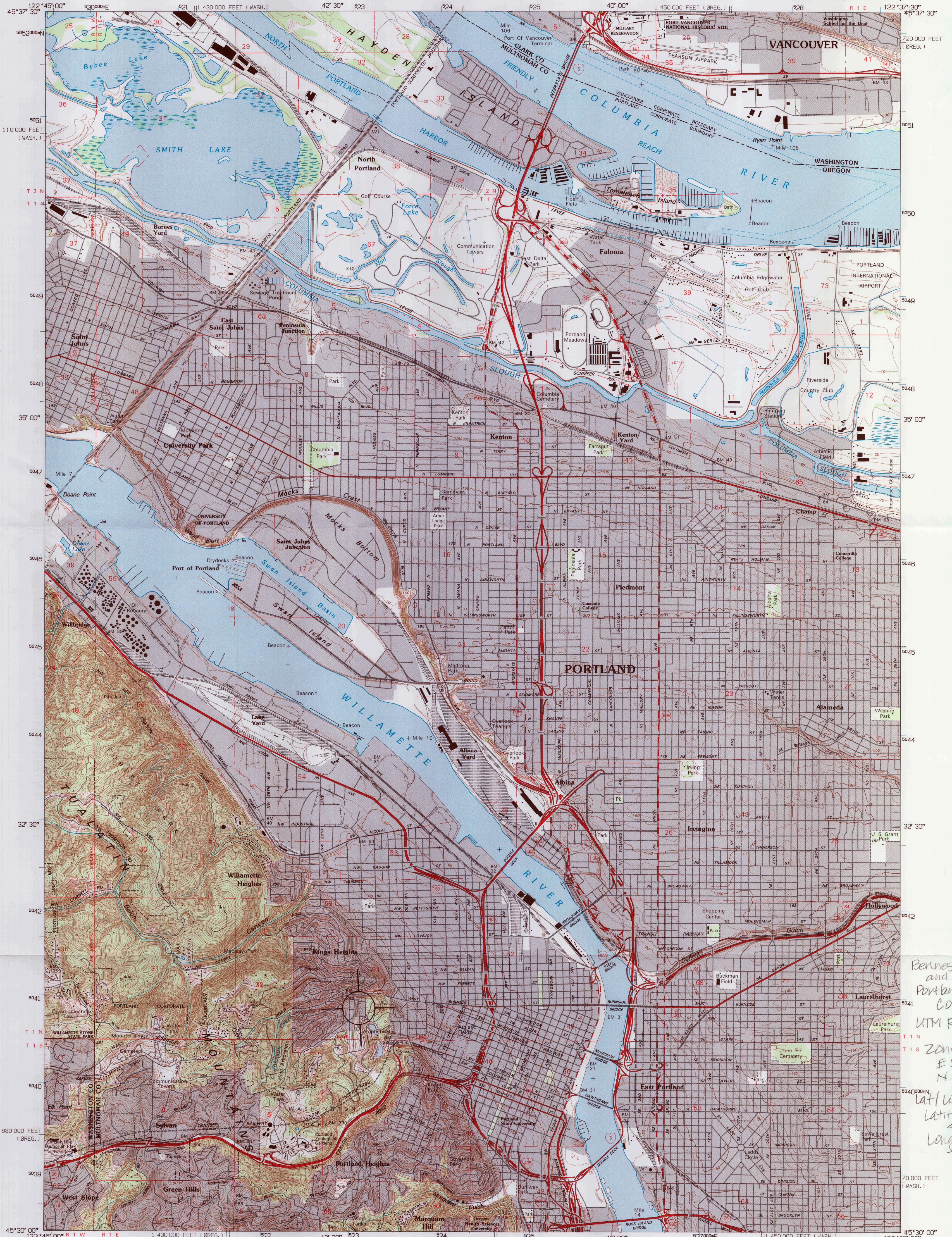
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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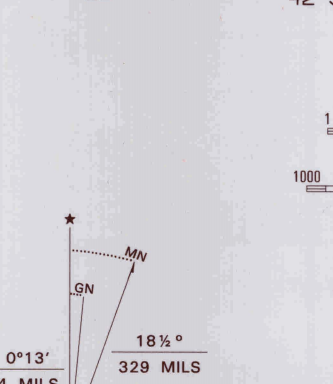
Figure 12. Historic photograph of Bennes house (n.d.)





Barnes, John
and Anne
Portland, Multnomah
County,
UTM Reference
Zone 10:
E 52303
N 50410
Lat/Long Coords
Latitude
45.522
Longitude
122.70

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA and State of Oregon
Compiled from imagery dated 1951. Revised from imagery
dated 1950. PLS and survey control current as of 1961
Map edited 1995. Contours and land elevations have
not been revised and may conflict with other content
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and
blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 10
10 000-foot ticks: Oregon Coordinate System, north zone and
Washington Coordinate System, south zone
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27
and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from
National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



SCALE 1:24 000

1 000 2 000 3 000 4 000 5 000 6 000 7 000 8 000 9 000 10 000

1 000 2 000 3 000 4 000 5 000 6 000 7 000 8 000 9 000 10 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2 FEET
TO CONVERT FEET TO METERS MULTIPLY BY 0.3048
TO CONVERT METERS TO FEET MULTIPLY BY 3.2808

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway
Secondary highway
hard surface
hard surface

Light-duty road, hard or
improved surface
Improved road
Unimproved road

Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

1 Sante Island
2 Vancouver
3 Orchards
4 Linton
5 Mount Taber
6 Beaverton
7 Lake Oswego
8 Gladstone

PORTLAND, OR-WA
45122-E6-TF-024
1990
DMA 1475 II SW-SERIES V892















123456789

WM































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bennes, John Virginus and Annice, House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Multnomah

DATE RECEIVED: 2/08/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/05/13
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/20/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/27/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000119

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3.27.13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor



Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE, Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

(503) 986-0671

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org



January 29, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
USDOI National Park Service - Cultural Resources
1201 "Eye" Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Shull:

At the recommendation of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, I hereby nominate the following historic property to the National Register of Historic Places:

BENNES, JOHN VIRGINIUS & ANNICE, HOUSE
122 SW MARCONI AVE
PORTLAND, MULTNOMAH COUNTY

We appreciate your consideration of this nomination. If questions arise, please contact Diana Painter, Architectural Historian, at (503) 986-0668.

Sincerely,

for 
Roger Roper
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.

