

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oregon
COUNTY:	Multnomah
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	DEC 19 1974

1. NAME

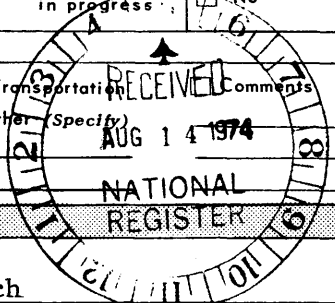
COMMON:	First Presbyterian Church of Portland
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1200 SW Alder		Representative Edith Green	
CITY OR TOWN: Portland		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Oregon Third Congressional District	
STATE Oregon	CODE 41	COUNTY: Multnomah	CODE 051

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered 	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment 	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum 	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific 	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Board of Trustees for the First Presbyterian Church	STATE: Oregon
STREET AND NUMBER: 1200 SW Alder	
CITY OR TOWN: Portland	
STATE: Oregon	CODE: 41

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Multnomah County Courthouse	STATE: Oregon
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN: Portland	
STATE: Oregon	CODE: 41

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings	STATE: Oregon
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Parks and Recreation Section	
STREET AND NUMBER: Oregon State Highway Division	STATE: Oregon
CITY OR TOWN: Salem	

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Portland's First Presbyterian Church, located at 1200 SW Alder Street, is an excellent example of the Richardsonian High Victorian Gothic and has an exceptionally fine wooden interior. Designed by W. F. McCaw, it was constructed from 1886 to 1890 at a cost of about \$120,000. The church measures 85 x 140 feet with the traditional (or liturgical) West Front facing east. A 185-foot spire on the north-east corner of the building defines the corner of SW Alder Street and 12th Avenue. The rusticated bichrome facade is executed in black basalt, now weathered a soft grey, with Bellingham Bay sandstone trim.

The main block of the building is the gable-roofed auditorium with a low marthex on the south end. The main entrance to the marthex is through an arched and pedimented door in the tower base. There is another entrance through an arched door set in a small gabled pavilion-like protrusion at the opposite west side of the marthex. A small dormer-like pavilion is centered in the marthex under the great south arched window with tracery and stained glass. Further illumination in the 69 1/2 x 77 foot auditorium is provided by rose-like windows set in gabled dormers in the roof. The impression of a T-shaped cruciform plan is given by a transverse gables containing an arched tracery window at the west end, though the gable end does not extend beyond the auditorium block. These gables contain a chapel with the pulpit at the south end.

Within, the auditorium is the model of nineteenth century preaching-church organization, with the pulpit as follows. On the main floor, pews radiate in a semi-circle from the center pulpit on the west side. Ministers' stalls and elaborate Elders' chairs face the congregation under a projecting wooden gallery with fan-vault corning. The chair sits above, facing the congregation, in an apse-like recess. All is richly carved wood with Gothic motifs and details. A gallery with "arched eyebrow" curves, added in 1892, undulates around the other three sides of the auditorium. The whole is covered by a richly articulated timber roof which soars 57 feet above the auditorium with arched braces, hammerbeams, king-posts, tie beams, purlins and rafters, all carved and ornamented, and, like the rest of the woodwork, in a natural finish.

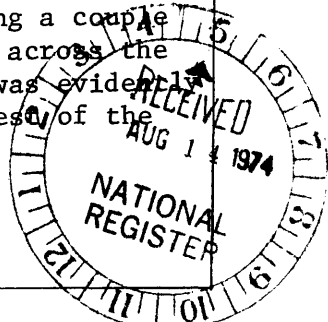
The building has been altered very little over the years. The portecochere with a high carriage step on the south-east corner survives intact. The copper sheathing on the spire dates from 1929. Old photographs show a lowered opening in the horizontal bands half way up the spire with a steeply pitched pedimental hood over the arched opening, otherwise the spire is much the same. During a refreshing and reconditioning a couple of years ago, it was discovered that an arcade originally ran across the west end of the building providing access to the chapel. It was evidently removed when the present Tudor style church hall was built west of the church in 1912.

marthex

sp

south west

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



4. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1886-1890**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The First Presbyterian Church is among the few remaining examples of High Victorian Gothic architecture in Portland and ranks as one of the finest examples in the state. The interior is without peer in Oregon, and architecture historian Marion Ross ranks it as one of the finest examples of its kind in the country. Though it now competes with a steadily increasing number of high-rise buildings, the lofty spire continues to be one of Portland's favorite landmarks.

The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, third oldest in the state, dates from 1853 and was formally organized and recognized in 1854. Services were held in homes under the direction of the Rev. J. L. Yantis, D.D., who journeyed twice monthly on horseback from Calipooia, 80 miles to the south. The congregation erected their first building at SW 31st and Washington streets in 1864. Early members form a veritable who's who roster of Portland, including H. W. Corbett, W. S. Ladd, J. C. Ainsworth, and Jacob Kamm, many of whom are associated with other noteworthy Oregon buildings.

The original congregation of twelve had expanded to 900 in the 1880s and felt the need for a new building. W. F. McCaw was chosen as architect and his plans were adopted in July, 1886. Services were held in the chapel at the west end of the new building in 1889 and the church was completed in 1890.

William F. McCaw was born in Dublin Ireland in 1850. His father was an architect and builder in Belfast. William McCaw attended private schools in Belfast, and at the age of 12 began the study of architecture. At age 15 he joined his father in business and gained much practical experience. In 1872, young McCaw moved to Toronto, Canada where he was employed as head draftsman in the office of William Irving. After three years he opened his own office, working in this capacity until 1881, when for various health reasons, he decided to move to a milder climate. Traveling through the Northwest, he arrived in Portland in April, 1882. He soon began work for Warren H. Williams and several months later engaged into partnership with E. M. Burton. This partnership soon dissolved and he returned to work for Williams, with whom he remained until 1884 when he opened an independent office. This office designed several Portland buildings, among which are the First Regiment Armory, Portland (continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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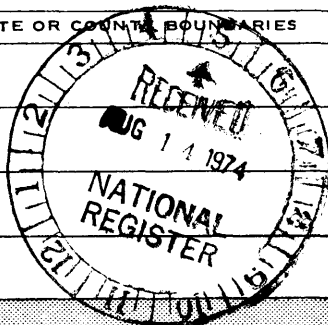
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		45 ° 31 ' 17 "	122 ° 40 ' 59 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 0.225

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Paul Hartwig, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: Parks and Recreation Section DATE: August 1, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Division

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon 97310 CODE: 41

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: David Stalbot

Title: State Parks Superintendent

Date: August 7, 1974

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

AR Mortensen
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/19/74

ATTEST:
Jim Smith
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 11/18/74

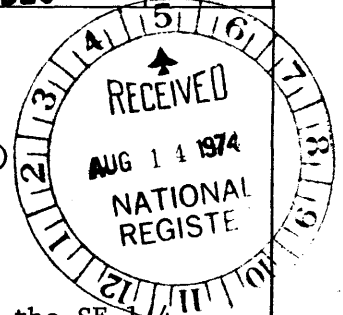
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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND (CONTINUED)



2. Location

The First Presbyterian Church of Portland is located in the SE 1/4 Sec. 33, T. 1N., R. 1E., of the Willamette Meridian, Multnomah County, Oregon, in the original plat of Portland, Block N 1/2 "H", Lots 1, 2, and 8, Assessor's Map #3028.

8. Significance

Cordage works, the Grace Methodist, United Presbyterian and First Presbyterian churches, and many residences. In 1888, he took a partner, Richard Martin, Jr., and the firm became McCaw & Martin. In June 1891, the firm took another partner, Manson White. The firm of McCaw, Martin and White designed many residences and commercial buildings in Portland including The Skidmore Block, Portland University buildings, and the Dekum Block.

The individual who carved the intricate wood detail in the First Presbyterian Church is unknown, but the supervisor of construction was William Luther Higgins and the general contractor for the interior woodwork was Archibald M. McKenzie. The black basalt stone was quarried in St. Helen's, Oregon, and the sandstone trim came from Bellingham Bay in Washington Territory. A bell in the spire is made of metal from a melted down Civil War cannon. This bell was originally mounted in the 31st and Washington church, and moved with the congregation into the new church in 1889 or 1890. Portland's First Presbyterian Church is maintained in good condition today. The congregation is proud of their building, and its continued use is anticipated in the foreseeable future.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hill, Edith Knight, "Church Preserves Relics of City in 70's," Oregonian, January 15, 1933, p. 2.

Clyde, Velma, "Historic Church Reflects Early Architectural Goals," Oregonian, February 26, 1972, p. 22.

"History and Directory of the First Presbyterian Church, Portland, Oregon," pamphlet, printed by order of session, April 1889.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND (CONTINUED)

9. Major Bibliographical References (cont.)

Ross, Marion D., "Architecture in Oregon, 1845-1895," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. LVII, No. 1, March 1956, p. 60-61.

Ross, Marion D. "125 Years of Building," AIA Journal, June, 1968, p. 125.

Hines, H. K., An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1893), p. 677. Biographical data on William F. McCaw.

Vaughan, Thomas and McMath, George, A Century of Portland Architecture, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1956), p. 55-56.

Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1870, (Cambridge: The M. I. T. Press, 1969) pp. 89-96.

