

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **JUL 13 1983**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Rice Brothers and Adams Building

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 136 Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Myrtle Creek N/A vicinity of Fourth Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Douglas code 019

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	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> 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 Dr. and Mrs. Roland E. Link

street & number PO Box 754

city, town Myrtle Creek N/A vicinity of Oregon state 97457

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Deed Records, County Clerk's Office

street & number Douglas County Court House

city, town Roseburg state Oregon 97470

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rice Brothers and Adams Building in Myrtle Creek, Oregon was built as a general merchandise store in 1915 and occupies a 50x100-foot lot at the southeast corner of Main and Second Streets. Rectangular in plan and measuring approximately 50x80 feet, the building is oriented longitudinally on its lot, facing northeasterly onto Main Street. It is two stories in height on a basement which, owing to the sloping terrain, is above grade at the southwesterly or rear end of the lot. The whole is of reinforced concrete and represents an early use of concrete in local building construction. As was typical of small-town Commercial style buildings of its type, the Rice Brothers and Adams Building had a utilitarian air masked only by a smooth stucco finish coat on the street facades and by such basic architectural details as a simple cornice and string course. Its continuous bank of frameless, trabeated second story windows is organized into three groups of three windows each fitted with double-hung sash with one-over-one lights. The tripartite organization of the upper facade is emphasized by blockish, pendant pilasters. In the central spandrel, the building title escutcheon remains, covered only by a coat of paint. The northwest elevation fronting Second Street is virtually blind, with the exception of an emergency exit toward the rear and four frameless second story windows of varying size. The rear, or southwest elevation is unfinished, which is to say that the rough concrete surface is exposed, and its openings are organized in three bays of frameless, paired, double-hung windows in each of three stories, except for the lowermost story in which the warehouse entrance occupies the center bay. The southeast elevation abuts a single-story building of reinforced concrete built for the Rice Brothers at a slightly later date. The latter has been remodeled and is no longer visually cohesive with the larger building.

The Rice Brothers Building has been affected externally only by modification of its ground story front. Originally divided equally into three wide bays, the store front had plate glass display windows on either side of a central, recessed entrance. In each section were transom windows of five lights each. In the 1970s, when the building was occupied by an auto supply dealer, the display windows and main entrance were set back from the wall plane, but the square columns remain in place the full length of the facade, thus leaving the structural divisions intact. In 1981, an additional column was added at the southerly end of the facade to provide a separate street-level entrance to the upper story.

Internally the building has undergone some change. Originally, the first floor mercantile area was open to the second floor, which was, in effect, a mezzanine. In the 1950s, a full floor was added to the upper story and the space was occupied as a movie theater. In addition to the storefront changes already discussed, in the later 1970s a longitudinal partition was inserted to make two separate stores on the first floor. Most of the original door and window trim and a rear interior staircase, all plain in character, are intact.

Access to all levels of the building was provided by a rear interior stairway. The staircase to the basement was removed in the 1970s, but railings and all other materials are in storage and the staircase will be assembled when the basement occupant's lease expires. There was also a stairwell at the front of the store which ran from the main level to the basement. This has been temporarily boarded off to keep people from going down to the basement, but is only covered over and will be removed upon expiration of the lease of the first floor occupant. At that time, also, removal of the longitudinal partition dividing the ground story will be considered.

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In the 1950s the upper level was filled in to make a complete third story and the mezzanine railings were removed. At this time, several windows were opened in the exterior wall fronting Second Street. The second floor was renovated by the current owners in 1981, the major change being addition of separate entrance to the upstairs from main street. At that time, also, the emergency exit was punched through the northwest wall to meet code requirements.

The basement remains the same large warehouse it was when the building was built, with restrooms in the rear and a rear exit onto a loading platform.

Future restoration plans include recreating original exterior paint treatment (pale ochre body color with contrasting trim) and highlighting the historic storefront title excutcheon.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1915 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rice Brothers and Adams Building, built of reinforced concrete in 1915, occupies a 50x100-foot lot at the southeast corner of Main and Second Streets in Myrtle Creek, Oregon (population: 3,300). Two stories in height on a basement which is above grade on the downslope side of the site to the southwest, or rear, the building is regarded as the most imposing on Myrtle Creek's main street. Its neighbor to the southeast is a single-story concrete building built for the Rice Brothers at a slightly later date, but the exterior of the later concrete building has been altered by a modern storefront and is no longer visually related to the subject property. A straightforward, small-town version of Commercial style architecture, the Rice Brothers Building displays in its topmost story the distinct but unadorned classical cornice, the continuous bank of frameless, trabeated windows, and the string course which are typical of concrete buildings of the period. Interestingly, the original building title escutcheon remains intact in the center spandrel, having been covered only by a coat of paint.

The building is locally significant under National Register criterion "a" because it played an integral role in the local economy based on mining activity. James Rice was a farmer who was persuaded by the superintendent of the Chieftan and Continental Gold Mines to start a sales outlet for produce and drygoods which would have the exclusive patronage of the mines. The resulting enterprise, established by Rice in 1900, is thought to have been the first mercantile business in the vicinity of Myrtle Creek, and the building Rice constructed in 1915 in partnership with Henry Adams and his brother, Harry Rice, made it the largest also. The motivation for building the large new store in 1915 was to provide a basement warehouse which could be stocked with winter supplies for the mines and outlying farms. Warehouse items were transported to and from the railroad station across bottom land to the west and were loaded and off-loaded at a loading platform at the warehouse entrance centered in the building's rear wall. The first floor was a grocery and drygoods store, open to the topmost story, which was, in effect, a mezzanine.

The Rice Brothers and Adams Building is significant, also, under National Register criterion "c" as the largest and most intact example of the early use of concrete in local construction. In a recent study of the early uses of concrete in Oregon building, University of Oregon graduate student Harry Weiss has pointed out that the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 gave impetus to an increased use of concrete and that, beginning in 1908, reinforced concrete buildings are recorded on the insurance rating maps of the Sanborn Map Company for towns and cities in Oregon. To soften the raw concrete surfaces, builders of stores and public buildings covered primary facades with a smooth stucco coat which also provided additional waterproofing. Frequently, rear faces, and those adjacent to neighboring buildings, as in the case of the Rice Brothers and Adams Building in Myrtle Creek, were uncoated, and the rough surfaces left by the wood forms were exposed. Typically, windows of reinforced concrete buildings were unornamented. Often, as in the case of the subject property, the only architectural embellishment consisted of a string course separating first and second stories and a simple cornice. The advantages of reinforced concrete over conventional masonry construction were added strength and fire protection and the ability to open more of the

9. Major Bibliographical References

Weiss, Harry M., "Early Concrete Construction in Oregon, 1880-1915," Master's thesis presented to the Graduate School of the University of Oregon (Interdisciplinary studies program: Historic Preservation), June, 1983.

Vertical files pertaining to Myrtle Creek, Douglas County Library, Roseburg.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Roseburg, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

110	471651310	41763400
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

--	--	--

H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynda Kay Link

organization N/A date December 4, 1982

street & number PO Box 754 telephone (503) 863-6785

city or town Myrtle Creek state Oregon 97457

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 July 6, 1983

For NPS use only

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

date 8/11/83


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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wall surface to window space for natural light and display purposes.

While the Rice Brothers and Adams Building does not represent the earliest use of concrete construction in Myrtle Creek, it is unquestionably the largest and most intact of any of the historic examples. It was antedated by four years by the Moore Building (1911), a two-story commercial building on the opposite side of Main Street, between Second and Third Streets, which housed the I.O.O.F. Hall on the second floor. The Moore Building still stands but its ground story has been modified by a modern storefront, and its cornice has been removed. One other concrete building in Myrtle Creek which antedated the Rice Brothers Building was a single-story bank building of concrete block which stood at the northeast corner of Main and Second Streets. Recorded by the Sanborn Map Company in 1912, it has since been demolished.

The original proprietor of the subject building was James Rice, who needed a larger store and warehouse for his thriving mercantile operation. Rice had been one of the first settlers in the area and initially farmed land near the Chieftain and Continental Gold Mines. The superintendent of the Chieftain, Bill Stewart, told Mr. Rice that if he would start a grocery store, the mines would purchase all supplies from him. Therefore, Rice started a grocery store in 1900. It was the first mercantile store in the area. By 1913, Rice had grown out of his first building, and was down the street another few feet in a larger building, but he still felt a need for a large warehouse in addition to the store. He took in Henry Adams as a partner, and his brother, Harry Rice, decided to join the venture. The Rice Brothers and Adams were responsible for constructing a two story building with basement, 50x80 feet with a 10' loading dock at the back. This was a reinforced concrete structure. The builders are reported to have framed in the walls and poured the concrete by hitching horses to a scaffolding which held one wheelbarrow filled with concrete. The horses then pulled the scaffolding up and down the sides of the building to pour the concrete. Many men were needed to build what was then, as now, the largest commercial building in Myrtle Creek. According to local tradition, Rice called in all those men who had past due grocery bills and asked them to work in trade, and all obliged! The store was opened in 1915 and contained general merchandise, hardware, sporting goods, groceries, and men's, women's and children's apparel. The top floor was, in effect, a mezzanine, the center being open down to the street level. This level contained a millinery shop. A salesman traditionally came in each spring from Portland during the historic period with the latest styles of hats and used this space to sell them.

The basement warehouse was vital to the success of the expanded mercantile operation. The railroad passenger station and freight house at Myrtle Creek stood approximately one-half mile west of the Rice Brothers Building across bottomland. During winter the fields between the town and the depot became too muddy to traverse. Therefore, Myrtle Creek residents either had to stock grocery staples for the whole winter or go without. The idea Rice had was to warehouse supplies for the townspeople, people living out of town, and the mines. With this idea in mind, he built the basement as a storehouse with a large loading platform. When fall came, Rice Brothers and Adams are said to have ordered two railroad cars of flour, one of salt, one of sugar, and one with mixed items. Many teams and drivers would be hired and all the groceries would be transported from the depot to the warehouse. The basement, a concrete stronghold, thus, was filled with enough supplies to last the winter.

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The subject building remained a store until the 1950s, at which time it was sold and the upper story adapted to house the Rio movie theatre. In the 1970s the first floor and basement housed the Western Auto Store. In the late 1970s, the first floor was divided into two stores, a dress shop and a Montgomery Ward Store.

The current owner purchased the building in 1981 and renovated the second story as an exercise studio where gymnastics, dance, baton, cheerleading, tumbling, and acrobatics are taught and teen dances and recitals are held. The first floor remains divided into two spaces, but upon expiration of the Montgomery Ward lease, consideration will be given to removing the partition. The basement continues in service as a warehouse for Western Auto.

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The Rice Brothers and Adams Building occupies Lot 5 of Block 10 in the Town of Myrtle Creek, Douglas County, Oregon. EXCEPT that portion of Lot 5, Block 10, Town of Myrtle Creek, Douglas County, Oregon, which lies between the Southeasterly line of said Lot 5 and a concrete building line to the Northwest and which is described as follows: Beginning at the most easterly corner of said Lot on the Southwesterly side of Main Street of said town, and running thence South 42° 57' West 100 feet and along the lot line between said Lot 5 and Lot 6, said block, to the most Southerly corner of said lot; thence North 47° 03' West 4.8 feet along the Southwesterly side of said Lot 5 to a point; thence North 43° 42' East 100 feet, which is along the Southeasterly face of a concrete building, to a point on the Southwesterly side of said street; thence South 47° 03' East 3.5 feet along the Southwesterly side of said street to the place of beginning, and being within Lot 5, Block 10, of the Town of Myrtle Creek, Douglas County, Oregon.