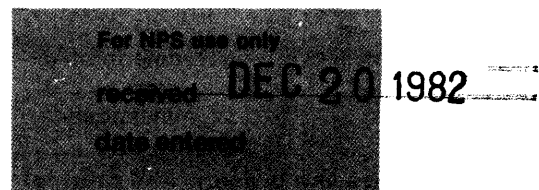


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



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

1. Name

historic Times Building

and/or common Times Square Building

2. Location

street & number 414 Olive Way not for publication

city, town Seattle vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Washington code 053 county King code 033

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name 414 Olive Associates

street & number c/o Stephen K. Koehler, 6806 96th Avenue S.E.

city, town Mercer Island vicinity of state Washington 98040

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. King County Administration Building

street & number 500 4th Avenue

city, town Seattle state Washington 98104

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Seattle Inventory of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Urban Conservation

city, town Seattle state Washington 98104

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Times Building is a compact, well detailed structure styled in the fashion of the Italian Renaissance. It occupies a triangular parcel in the commercial core of Seattle, and the plan of the steel and concrete building conforms to its site. The apex is on Fourth Avenue to the west, and the somewhat narrow base is at Fifth Avenue to the east; the length of the building parallels Stewart Street on the north and Olive Way to the south. The site rises to the west, and as a result the building is five stories in height at Fourth Avenue and seven stories at Fifth Avenue.

Conceived originally as the publishing headquarters of the Seattle Times, the building was specially designed to meet the needs of a major metropolitan newspaper. Little of the interior arrangements which served that use survive; the structure was adapted for a variety of commercial purposes following the relocation of the Times offices in 1931, and underwent many revisions. The exterior, however, is virtually unchanged.

The first and second stories serve as a visual base for the balance of the structure. The lower portions of the first floor are faced with Washington Index granite; terra cotta blocks finish the elevations to an intermediate cornice at the second story level. Window openings below the cornice are rectangular and fitted with voussoirs in flat arches. Above the cornice on the north and south elevations are monumentally scaled window openings rising to the full height of the building; each is closed with a round arch 17 feet in diameter. Between these major openings are eagles in terra cotta, set against a turquoise field; the eagle was the symbol of the Times.

The major entry was at Fifth Avenue. The doorway opened onto a vestibule of marble and Caen stone with a vaulted, coffered ceiling. A marble stairway led up to the main offices. The corporate spaces were done in an Adam style, based on the governor's room in New York's former city hall. A transverse vestibule accommodated entry from Stewart Street and Olive Way; it was notable for its sculptured panels representing the publication and distribution of news. Virtually all of the original interior has disappeared over the years, and a bank now occupies a major portion of the first floor accessible from Fifth Avenue. The most significant remainder of the once lush interior is a compass rose of inlaid brass and marble in the transverse vestibule. A familiar symbol of journalism, its center is set with the initials "ST."

The terra cotta is a buff or beige color, laid up in heavily rusticated coursed ashlar. Spandrels, cornice lines, entries, and some window openings are set with rosettes, running mold bands, and other decorative devices. The terra cotta was manufactured by the Denny-Renton Clay and Coal Company. The cornice was fitted with electric lights, and 28 specially constructed light standards surrounded the building at sidewalk level; the light standards were removed at an unknown period.

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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1916 **Builder/Architect** Bebb and Gould

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Times Building is significant as the former headquarters of one of Seattle's prominent newspapers, the Times, and as an excellent example of the work of the architectural firm of Bebb and Gould. In addition, it is especially notable as a representative of Seattle's many terra cotta commercial buildings, perhaps unique in its free-standing construction which allowed the decorative treatment to be carried to all elevations.

The Seattle Times is probably best known in the northwest as the paper built by the Blethen family, and the Times Building is associated with two family members in particular: Col. Alden J. Blethen (1846-1915) and his son, Gen. C.B. Blethen (1879-1941). The colonelcy originated with service on the staffs of two Minnesota governors, and C.B. was a Major General in the Washington National Guard.

Alden Blethen had been involved with newspaper publishing in the mid-West, and after suffering several set backs there, he came to Seattle to try a new venture. Shortly after his arrival, he purchased the Times in 1896. It had first appeared ten years earlier, and had gone through a series of owners and editorships in the tough competition of early Seattle; when acquired by Blethen, a job printing business was running the paper as a sideline. Blethen was an effective manager and editor. He added innovations such as society, fraternal, and theater columns. From a circulation of 3,000 in 1896, the Times appeared in 70,000 copies each day and 80,000 on Sundays by 1915. A number of moves had occurred in those years, but by 1915, Blethen had determined to build a structure specifically designed for the business, editorial, and mechanical needs of newspaper publication.

The site he chose was north of the city's commercial core in an area that was just beginning to grow, and he selected the locally prominent firm of Bebb and Gould to help fulfill his vision. Alden Blethen had an active hand in the design, and included such features as a visitors' gallery and a pressroom visible to the public. He and the architects worked with models of each floor to determine the best organization of the plant and office space, and together they devised a structure which would meet the unique needs of publication. Good lighting was essential for the 350 employees to be housed in the building, and the window area was extensive for the time: the glazing was equal to half of the floor area. A four-inch layer of diatomaceous earth was placed over the structural flooring to provide sound insulation from the heavy presses on the basement level. It was mid-way during the design phase that Alden Blethen died, and the construction was carried out under the attention of C.B. Blethen.

The foundations and concrete structure of the Times Building were overbuilt in anticipation of later expansion; an additional four stories could be added if need be. There was also the prospect of expanding laterally from the site, burrowing under the streets to reach other nearby property held by the Blethens. Construction was by the A.W. Quist Company.

The opening of the Times Building was an extravagant affair culminating a move of several weeks during which all the presses and type setting machines had to be disassembled and moved to the new building without interrupting the publication of the paper. To announce that the move was complete, the Times had previously arranged the detonation of 21 bombs, and in the evening following there was a concert and a fireworks display from the roof. Crowds packed the streets and threaded their way through the new building on

9. Major Bibliographical References

Seattle Times, 9/17/16; 9/24/16; 9/25/16; 8/11/46 Rotogravure
Office of Urban Conservation Nomination Form

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Seattle South

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	0	5	4	9	8	6	2	5	2	7	3	2	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Heirs of Sarah A. Bell's Addition, Block 8, Lots 1, 2, and 3.

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Seattle Office of Urban Conservation; additional research by David M. Hansen

organization Office of Archaeology & Hist. Pres. date October 1982

street & number 111 West 21st Avenue, KL-11 telephone (206) 753-4117

city or town Olympia state Washington 98504

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 Jack E. Thon

date Dec. 10, 1982

For NPS use only

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

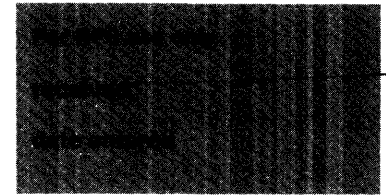
Delores Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 1/27/83

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

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tours. It was a strikingly handsome structure, and reporters for the Times rose to the task, describing it as "gleaming softly by day in the sunlight in all the beauty of its rose-tinted buff exterior [and] glowing brilliantly by night under the hundreds of brilliant lights suspended from below the cornice."

With the move, the Times instituted two popular new services. One was an information line where a battery of operators in the Times Building would field questions on any topic, from the size of the pyramids to trolley departure schedules. The other service was the instantaneous reporting of baseball games. A large illuminated baseball diamond was displayed on the Fifth Avenue side of the building; lights were flashed on and off to indicate plays as received over the teletype, and the score was continuously maintained. A good game could draw a crowd sufficient to fill the side walk, block the street, and spill over onto the small square opposite.

By 1931, the circulation of the paper had grown to 100,000 daily and 140,000 Sunday. The Times Building was now too small and its site too much in the center of other activity to function well despite its designed ability to grow upwards or outwards. A new plant was built at the far northeast corner of the city center and the paper relocated to its home to date.

After 1931, the Times still maintained an office downtown, but not in the Times Building. The Times Building was renamed the Blethen Building, but its use prior to World War II is not known, and it seems to have been vacant. In 1941, it was identified as the Old Times Building and tenanted with a variety of small commercial and service offices, a use which has continued to the present. In the 1960's the Times Building began to be referred to as the Times Square Building, probably reflecting earlier descriptions of decades before which identified the structure as the Times Building at Times Square.

C.H. Bebb (1856-1942) received his education at King's College, the University of Lausanne, and the London School of Mines. He came to Seattle from South Africa in 1890 and worked for the following five years as an architectural engineer for the Denny Clay Company. Bebb is credited with the design of the state capitol's Legislative Building, Temple of Justice, and Insurance Building (all National Register, 1979) before joining with Carl Gould. Gould (1873-1939) attended Philip Exeter Academy, Harvard University, and the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He came to Seattle in 1908, after associations with McKim, Mead and White, George C. Post in Wisconsin, and Daniel Burnham in San Francisco. Together, Bebb and Gould were responsible for many significant structures in the Seattle cityscape including the Suzzallo Library, Education Hall, Forestry Hall, Raitt Hall, and the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington; the University Lutheran Church, the Lakeside School, the St. Nicholas School, and the Seattle Art Museum (National Register, 1976).