

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JUN 26 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name JEAN
other names/site number Steamboat JEAN; Sternwheeler JEAN 014221

2. Location

street & number Hells Gate State Park, 3620 A Snake River Ave.
city, town Lewiston
state Idaho code ID county Nez Perce code 069 zip code 83501

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State (checked), public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district, site, structure (checked), object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0) Total (1)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Thomas J. Green
Date: 6/19/89
State or Federal agency and bureau: Deputy Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register. (checked)
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper: Ralph L. Savage
Date of Action: 8/8/89

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION -- water

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Not in use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)OTHER: Steampowered towboat;

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sternwheeler

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other welded steel plate

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The JEAN is a steel-hulled, twin sternwheel, steam-powered tow boat built and launched in Portland, Oregon, in 1938. The JEAN retains its basic integrity in aspects of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The primary features include the welded steel hull of double-chined design (early for this type of construction) and the twin sternwheels. Although the vessel's flying bridge and pilot house were rebuilt in the late 1940's, the essential design of the JEAN remains as it was when it was launched. A minor modification of the sternwheel cover appears to have been made some time before 1955. Still afloat, the JEAN is moored in a berth on the Snake River, several miles south of the port of Lewiston, Idaho. This river setting and its association with the Columbia system is appropriate.

The registered length of the JEAN is 140'3" at the waterline, 168' overall. Breadth at the waterline is 40', and an overall breadth of 40'8". Loaded draft is 5'7", light draft is 4'6". Depth is 7'10". The highest fixed point above the light waterline is 46'1". Each of the two sternwheels are 12'6" wide by 22' in diameter. The plans were modified during construction, and the JEAN was built 20 feet shorter than originally specified. With the heavy equipment on board, this made her float low in the water which simplified working on her principal cargo -- large log rafts. She is registered at 533 tons gross, 310 tons net.

The steel hull of the JEAN is made of welded steel construction with plate thicknesses of 3/8" and 5/16". Although originally designed as a single-chined hull, the boat was constructed to have a double-chined hull -- a hull that tapers slightly in toward the keel from the main deck to the water line, and from the water line to the keel -- a design that made the JEAN less resistant in the water. The superstructure is also constructed of welded steel, and the decking and pilot house are of fir.

The most distinguishing feature of the vessel is the double sternwheel arrangement. Each of the sternwheels was independently powered by its own separate engine. The JEAN was capable of 1200 horsepower, a powerful boat for its time. Although the weight of the engines slowed the responsiveness of the boat, the independently operated paddlewheels gave it exceptional maneuverability.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

1. Maritime History

2. Engineering

Period of Significance

1938

Significant Dates

1938

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Designer: McClaren, William D.

Builder: Commercial Iron Works (Portland, OR), for Western Transportation Company

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The JEAN is significant under Criterion A for its association with the maritime commerce of the Pacific Northwest. The Columbia River system has been the center of a vast water transportation network for over a century and a half. Over 500 vessels were constructed on the Columbia system to take advantage of the navigable waters and this efficient mode of transporting large cargoes. As such, the JEAN is representative of this commerce system, and was one of the last river towboats built specifically for this purpose. The JEAN is also significant under Criterion C for its unusual engineering features. Although sternwheelers had been common for decades, an uncommon feature of the JEAN was the use of twin, independently operated stern wheels. In addition, the welded steel hull is an unusual feature for a steam powered towboat, virtually all other steamers being wooden hulled.

The first steamboat constructed in the region was the sidewheeler COLUMBIA, launched in Astoria, Oregon, in 1850. The first sternwheeler, the JENNIE CLARK, followed in 1854 on the middle Columbia, and four years later the COLONEL WRIGHT became the first steampowered vessel to float above the Dalles, Oregon. The COLONEL WRIGHT was also the first steamboat to sail into Idaho waters, and in 1865 traveled one hundred miles into Hells Canyon.

The JEAN was constructed in 1938 by Commercial Iron Works of Portland, Oregon, for the Western Transportation Company, a subsidiary of Crown Zellerbach Corporation. The vessel was designed by William D. McLaren of Vancouver, British Columbia, who had designed ships for the Canadian Pacific Princess Line. According to one source, McLaren was the brother of the president of Crown Zellerbach and that is the reason he received the design contract. The vessel was named after Jean Naomi Seid, the daughter of J. J. Seid, a Crown Zellerbach executive. Only one other steamboat, the PORTLAND in 1947 (still extant), was constructed on the Columbia River system after the JEAN.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

McLaren, T. A.; William Dick McLaren, unpublished manuscript, no date.  
From collection of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, Vancouver, B.C.

Newell, Gordon, ed.; The H. W. McCurdy Marine History of the Pacific Northwest (Seattle, Washington: The Superior Publishing Company), 1966.

Petersen, Keith, with Mary Reed and Roger Slade; Historic Structures Report: Steamboat JEAN; Report #103, Idaho State Historical Society, 1981.

Tri-Coastal Marine, Inc. (Galveston, TX); JEAN, Survey Report of the Jean; manuscript report prepared for the Idaho State Historical Society, September 1987.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A  
 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:  
 State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A 

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

  
C 

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B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

  
D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All that area incorporated within the extreme length and breadth of the vessel as it floats at its berth.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary incorporates the entire area of the vessel.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Donald W. Watts; Historic Preservation Planner  
organization Idaho State Historical Society date March 8, 1989  
street & number 210 Main St. telephone (208) 334-3861  
city or town Boise state Idaho zip code 83702

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Although essentially intact in its basic form, the JEAN has undergone several modifications. In 1948 the vessel was struck by a swinging bridge which necessitated replacing the original pilot house and rebuilding much of the flying bridge. The sternwheel cover was originally straight at the aft edge as seen in a 1938 photograph; photographs from the 1950's show a scalloped edge. In 1962 all of the engines, boilers, and machinery within the boat was removed.

The following summaries describe individual components of the JEAN, their original configuration and current conditions:

**HULL:** The hull is divided by six watertight transverse bulkheads into seven spaces, four of which were subdivided by a centreline bulkhead which provided for eleven watertight compartments. Larger hatches and holes were cut into the bulkheads in several locations in the 1960's when the boat was used as a storage facility.

**RUDDERS:** None of the rudders presently exist. Originally, there were two main and two monkey rudders for each wheel, a total of eight.

**DECKS:** The superstructure is constructed entirely of welded steel plates originally covered with 1 1/2" tongue-and-groove fir. A canvas covering was applied over one deck; the other three were tarred.

Current conditions (Decks are identified as 1 through 4, from top to bottom):

Deck 1: Some boards on the port side have been replaced with plywood. The tar covering the area aft of the pilot house is cracking.

Deck 2 (Texas Deck): Originally covered with canvas, this deck surrounds the pilot's and skipper's cabins, with the major portion being aft of the cabins. The fir boards are now exposed, but appear to be in relatively good condition. Originally surrounded by a steel railing, the aft portion of the railing has been removed.

Deck 3 (Boiler Deck): Although the tar-covered boards are in fairly good condition, the tar is cracking and needs repair. A ladder from deck 2 to deck 3 which appears in historic photos is missing.

Deck 4 (Main Deck): This is a narrow deck completely surrounding the engine/boiler room and paddlewheels. The tar-covered boards appear to be relatively sound.

**PILOTHOUSE:** The pilothouse, rebuilt after the bridge collision in 1948, is basically intact; however, virtually all original furnishings and mechanical

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devices are missing. The copper visor surrounding the pilothouse is intact, although badly tarnished. Most of the windows have been broken.

FLYING BRIDGE: Rebuilt about 1948, the flying bridge is currently missing its two small decks. The form remains essentially intact.

PADDLEWHEELS: The paddlewheels were cut off at the waterline prior to towing the vessel to Lewiston in 1976. Wooden paddlebuckets are generally in good condition, although some need replacing.

PADDLEWHEEL COVER: Constructed of wood, the cover is in poor condition with evidence of rotting. It is possible the cover is not original, as photographs from 1938 show a straight bottom edge while photos from the 1950's show the scalloped edge it now has.

MAST: Originally the fir mast was a telescoping design which could be dropped to the level of the funnels. The mast is no longer extant.

ANCHOR: The anchor no longer remains.

LIFEBOAT: The one steel lifeboat, located on the Boiler Deck, is relatively intact although some interior wood parts are deteriorating.

ENGINE ROOM / BOILER ROOM: The engines and boilers were removed when the vessel was converted to storage use in 1962. The original engines were twin cross compound with H.P. cylinders 18" in diameter, L.P. 33" diameter x 7'0" stroke. Each pair of cylinders worked an independent wheel shaft with cranks at 90 degrees.

INTERIOR FEATURES:

Cabins: Most cabins are essentially intact and include bunks, closets, heaters, and other furnishings. Some radiators, bed springs and screen doors have been removed and are stored elsewhere in the vessel.

Galley: The refrigerator, pantry, and stove have been removed. A double sink and cabinets on the forward side remain. A major steel support beam was cut in order to install a passageway to the engine room.

Lounge/mess room: All furnishings have been removed and the skylights have been replaced with plywood.

Equipment: The towing winch, fire extinguishers, switchboard, condenser, steering engine and control, whistle, engines and boilers have all been removed.

Doors/windows: All window sashes appear to be original and in relatively good condition. Most window glass has been broken out, and most doors have been replaced.

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When launched in Portland on May 7, 1938, the JEAN was recognized for her unusual features -- a double-chined steel hull, unusual for steamers, and twin independently controlled stern paddlewheels. These features represented a merging of traditional and contemporary technologies -- the time-proven reliability of steam-powered propulsion in combination with the latest technology of all steel construction and an innovative use of twin sternwheels. According to Newell (1966):

The twin stern wheels were able to turn in opposite directions, enabling her to spin like a top, make almost right-angle turns, and even travel sideways in the manner of a crab, a type of maneuverability most useful in river operation. \*

The JEAN operated from 1938 to 1957 on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers for Western Transportation Company. The primary routes used by the JEAN were between Astoria, Oregon, and Camas, Washington, and between West Linn, Oregon, and Camas. Her primary purpose was towing large log rafts, measuring 60 feet by 720 feet, to Crown Zellerbach's paper mill at Camas. Other cargoes included hog fuels, paper products, and oil. After World War II, she was often used to tow former Liberty Ships, converted to grain barges, from the mouth of the Columbia to Portland.

The JEAN was a continuous operation vessel, working 24 hours a day. The only time she was not in operation was during repairs, inspection, or while in Portland taking on supplies and changing crews. Only rarely did weather force the boat to be temporarily idle. Because of its 24-hour operation, JEAN required three crews, two on board and one on shore, working on a three-week rotation schedule. On board, in addition to the skipper and pilot, were two crews of seven. The single cook worked both shifts.

In 1948 the JEAN was struck by the Morrison Bridge on the Willamette River in Portland. A gust of wind caught the swinging bridge, and the operator was unable to halt its movement in time to avoid collision with the vessel. There were no injuries, but considerable damage was inflicted to the superstructure which required rebuilding of the bridge and pilot house. Although it was not uncommon for boats to run into bridges, George Jackson, president of Western Transportation Company, recalled, "we have the distinction of being the only river tow boat company that was ever struck by a bridge." \*\*

The JEAN was retired in 1957. The size of the required crew and the widespread use of more powerful diesel engines made it no longer economically feasible to operate her. Although structurally and mechanically sound, the JEAN could no longer compete with the newer river workboats. In 1962 the JEAN was stripped of her engines, boilers, and other interior features, and converted into a floating machine shop and maintenance vessel by Western Transportation Company. Removal of the equipment and engines was a modification by her original owner to allow the vessel to continue in a new maritime use. She served in this capacity

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until she was donated to the Luna House Historical Society and towed to Lewiston, Idaho, in 1976. In 1979 ownership was transferred to the State of Idaho, Idaho State Historical Society.

Lewiston's location at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater Rivers historically made it an important transportation center. As the series of locks and canals on the Columbia continued to expand, steamboating played a major role in the movement of goods and people along the Snake/Columbia river system until the late 1930's. By World War II, however, the growth of the railroad industry and highway trucking began to affect the steamboat's efficiency as a major carrier for inland locations. More powerful diesel engines were also coming into their own, and by the mid 1950's had supplanted the steam engine as an efficient means of propulsion on the river. The LEWISTON, the last sternwheeler in the region, left for Portland in 1940.

River transportation continues to play a major role in the area. When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed Lower Granite Lock and Dam in 1975, Lewiston, Idaho, became a seaport with slackwater access to the Pacific Ocean almost 500 miles away. Despite its distance from the JEAN's home port of Portland, Lewiston's place in the Snake/Columbia river transportation system provides an appropriate location for the JEAN.

\* Gordon Newell, ed.; The H. W. McCurdy Marine History of the Pacific Northwest, p.463.

\*\* George Jackson; quoted in Historic Structures Report: Steamboat JEAN, p. 59. Tape recorded interview conducted by Mary Reed, Portland OR, February 2, 1981. Interview on file at Idaho State Historical Society, Boise.