

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Resub

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See also OPRN, 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 Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House

other names/site number The Rutherford House

multiple property document N/A

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

2. Location

street & number 833 NE Shaver Street not for publication

city or town Portland vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97212

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A X B ___ C ___ D

Christine Curran 6-29-15
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

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 eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Steph Belone 8/5/15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House
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5. Classification

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

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

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.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: ASBESTOS; WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK (chimney)

Narrative Description

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The **Rutherford House** is a 2,337 square foot, one-and-one-half story bungalow with a basement, a rectangular footprint, and a steeply pitched hip roof. Hip-roof dormers on the south, east, and north sides and a dramatic tapered chimney on the east façade embellish the roofline. The wood-frame building, originally clad in narrow beveled siding, is finished in asbestos shingle siding; it has a concrete foundation and composition shingle roof. The ca 1905 building displays a central entry on the front (south) façade, overlooking NE Shaver Street. It is flanked by a shallow canted bay window under boxed eaves to the left, complemented by a flush, three-part window to the right. A similar bay is located on the east façade of the building, which fronts on NE 9th Avenue. The residence, which is slightly raised, is accessed via two flights of stairs that approach a small stoop covered with a gable roof supported by two substantial posts. A major change to the building is the enclosure of the recessed front porch, originally located on the east side of the front façade, in 1936. Additional character-defining features, which were added within the historic period, include modest classical references at the front entry and in the interior, which were added in conjunction with this renovation.

Narrative Description

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Rutherford House, a hip-roof bungalow constructed ca 1905, is located in the southerly portion of the King Neighborhood in northeast Portland.¹

It faces south overlooking Shaver Street, which is mostly occupied by single-family homes. The property is at the northwest corner of NE 9th Avenue, which is also characterized by single-family residences. A historic church (now Mount Nebo Church of God) is located at the southwest corner of NE 9th and Mason to the north, on the same block as the subject property. The house is sited five blocks east of NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd (formerly Union Avenue), a heavily traveled north-south arterial (Highway 99E), which is primarily commercial in character and undergoing rapid redevelopment. The house is three blocks north of NE Fremont Street, a busy east-west collector street, characterized by commercial development at Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., single-family houses and duplexes, neighborhood commercial uses at NE 7th Avenue, and Mt. Zion Baptist Church at NE 8th Avenue. Irving Park is located south of Fremont Street between NE 7th and about NE 11th Avenues in this area.

SITE AND LANDSCAPING

The Rutherford House is situated on a 5,000 square foot corner lot (50 feet wide and 100 feet deep), on a gentle rise from both NE 9th Avenue and Shaver Streets. A concrete drive sits immediately west of the property line, providing access to the adjacent property at 823 NE Shaver Street, which is owned by Charles E. Rutherford. Single-family houses are located to the east, west, north, and south. A variety of ferns and a boxwood hedge are located east and west of the entry, and on either side of the stairs. A large juniper bush sits near the southeast corner of the site. There are a variety of junipers, hydrangeas, and other shrubs along the east property line. To the north, in the rear yard, are buddleia bushes, along with two apple trees and a birch tree. A variety of ferns and other shrubs sit along the rear of the house. A large holly tree is near the

¹ No building permits were found by which the construction date of the house could be verified. However, property ownership records verify that William and Etta Gwynn acquired both Lots 9 and 10 in July 1905 and divided the lots. The west half of Lots 9 and 10 were subsequently sold to Joseph Tremblay, who lived at 823 NE Shaver from 1906 to 1909. Gwynn and Tremblay were both building contractors. The two Shaver Street houses were identical prior to later alterations and also nearly identical to Tremblay's previous home at 820 NE 29th and the adjacent house at 812 NE 29th. This fact is a strong indication that all four houses may have been constructed by Tremblay.

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northwest corner, and a holly and buddleia bush are located near the southwest corner. A medium size elderberry tree sits mid-way along the property line to the west. The house is accessed by three concrete steps at the sidewalk, a short walkway, and then six concrete risers to the porch. Wrought-iron railings are located on either side of both sections of stairs.

EXTERIOR

The wood-frame Rutherford House is a one-and-one-half story bungalow with a basement. It is rectangular in plan and approximately 24 feet wide and 56 feet in length, 2,337 square feet in size, with a continuous concrete foundation. It is clad in asbestos shingle siding, which covers beveled siding. A simple frieze divides the first story from the upper half-level. The house has a steeply pitched, hip roof with three hipped dormers at the south, east, and north, and moderate boxed eaves. The roof consists of composition shingles over wood rafters. Gutters are K-style, connecting to downspouts. A tapered exterior chimney is located at the southeast corner of the house and an interior parged chimney rises near the north-south ridgeline to the north.²

The small, projecting entry porch above the concrete stairs is covered by an open gable with a simple elliptical arch. It is supported by two square, paneled posts with small capitals. Engaged pilasters are located at either side of the paneled entry door (not original), which is protected by a modern storm door. A later Colonial-style sconce provides porch lighting. The porch and stairs are enclosed with a painted, wrought-iron railing. On the façade, a bay with three leaded glass windows is west of the entry door. The central bay window is fixed, flanked by double-hung windows on the canted face. East of the entry door is a set of three leaded-glass windows; the central window is fixed, and the windows on either side are casements with scissor hinges. Above the entry porch in the upper half story is a hip roof dormer with paired, one-over-one-light, wood-frame, double-hung windows. A narrow frieze separates the windows from the dormer roof, which has boxed eaves.

On the east elevation, the large exterior chimney with a brick cap pierces the hip roof near the front of the building. It is connected to the roof with a chimney rod. To the north of the chimney is a projecting bay with three one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. A hip roof dormer, which matches the south dormer, projects from the roof above the bay. North of the bay are two individually placed, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. A garage beneath the house is located at the northeast corner, accessed by a concrete drive with concrete retaining walls on either side, with a mounted pipe rail on the north side. The pair of garage doors has six lights in the upper portion and three vertical panels below.

On the north (rear) elevation is a double-hung window near the northeast corner. A shed-roof porch projects from the house in the center. It was enclosed in the 1980s and has a metal door on the east side. It is accessed by two concrete steps at the sidewalk, a narrow walkway, and a wood stairway with seven risers and a simple 2" x 4" railing. A two-part aluminum-frame sliding window lights the enclosed porch. A hip roof dormer sits above and behind the enclosed porch. To the west of the enclosed porch are a double-hung window and a small fixed window at the northwest corner.

On the west elevation is a long, shallow projection that extends from behind the living room to the rear of the building. On this projection are two, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows.

INTERIOR

The interior of the Rutherford House reflects the rectangular plan typical of a bungalow of the era. The ground floor includes six rooms: living room, dining room, two bedrooms, kitchen, and bath. The entry opens onto a large living room running the width of the house, east to west. The easterly portion of the living room was constructed from the enclosure of the entry porch and removal of the hall partition in 1936. A brick fireplace is situated at the east wall, with a mantel with a scalloped trim piece below the mantelshelf; fluted pilasters flank the fireplace. Bookshelves are inset on either side of the fireplace, but are not permanently attached to the

² Parged or pargeting refers to a coat of cement mortar on the face of rough masonry construction.

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walls. A coved ceiling, picture rail, and molded baseboards were matched to original finishes in the westerly half of the living room. All woodwork is painted white. The living room is illuminated with two sets of windows: in the westerly half, a polygonal bay with a leaded-glass fixed center light and one-over-one-light, double-hung leaded-glass windows on either side, and in the easterly half, a set of three leaded-glass windows, with a fixed center light with a casement on either side. A ceiling light fixture with fan is from the 1970s. Fir floors are covered in wall-to-wall carpeting.

The dining room is entered through a plastered, arched opening from the living room. The dining room is finished with tall paneled wainscoting with a deep picture rail supported by modillions. The ceiling is plaster, with molding at the juncture of the walls and ceiling. On the east wall is a shallow, canted bay with three one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. The original wood heat register is located in the fir floors at the windows. On the north wall is the kitchen entry, with a paneled swinging door. There is an original built-in cabinet east of the kitchen door, with two glass cabinet doors and four drawers below. To the west of the kitchen entry and wainscot wall is a paneled entry door to the upstairs. At the northwest corner is a paneled entry door to the bedroom. A later ceiling fixture hangs in the center. Doors have simple brass hardware.

To the west the bedroom that housed the National Associated of Colored People (NAACP) Credit Union records in the 1950s and which functioned as Verdell Burdine Rutherford's office in the 1970s to 1990s. The baseboards, ceiling molding, and small paneled closet door (south of the entry door) match that of the dining room. The crown molding above the doors has been removed; ceiling panels cover the original plaster ceiling. There is one double-hung, one-over-one-light window on the west wall. All of the five-panel doors are original. A beaded corner board is located on a portion of the closet wall.

To the north is a five-panel door entry to the master bedroom. Finishes and details match those of the other bedroom, including the baseboards, doors, crown molding and a one-over-one-light, double-hung window in the west wall. A deep closet with a fixed window is located at the northwest corner.

To the north is the main bathroom, with a double-hung window on the north wall. The built-in tub, toilet, and sink are modern fixtures; the floor is vinyl and has a rubber base. There is one closet in the southwest corner. The bathroom opens to the west through a five-panel door to the back hall, which has vinyl flooring and rubber base.

To the east is a five-panel door in an angled wall that opens onto the kitchen, which also has vinyl flooring and a rubber base. Simple built-in cabinetry is located along the east and west walls. At the west wall above the stainless-steel sink are two aluminum-frame, one-over-one-light windows installed in the original window frames. The counters are Formica. There is a remnant of original beadboard wainscot to the west of the swinging entry door to the dining room and a kitchen closet. In the north portion of the kitchen are short walls on either side of an opening into an original pantry with wallpapered walls. There is a new aluminum-frame, one-over-one-light window on the north wall. Ceiling fixtures in the kitchen, pantry, and hall are modern.

To the north of the back hall is a hollow-core metal door leading to the rear porch, which was enclosed after a 1987 firebombing (see "Alterations"). Walls are plaster, with vinyl flooring and rubber base. There is an aluminum-frame sliding window in the north wall. A hollow-core metal door to the east enters the yard.

The stair to the upper floor of the Rutherford House is in the dining room. The stairway has fifteen risers and a simple wood handrail on brass mounts.

The upper floor is composed of three bedrooms and a bathroom. To the north of the stairway is a half-bath, accessed through a sliding hollow-core door, with vinyl floor, rubber base, and newer toilet and sink. There is an aluminum-frame sliding window on the north wall.

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To the east of the stairway, above the kitchen, is a small, windowless bedroom accessed by a hollow-core door. The ceiling slopes to the east.

A French door on the north wall opens into the bedroom above the dining room. Wood doors are plain with no hardware. The wood baseboard is plain and painted white. There are two recessed closets at the southwest and the southeast corners, with the ceiling sloping to the east. A pair of one-over-one-light windows is located on the east wall of the dormer in this location.

To the west of the stairway is a hall, above the bathroom and bedrooms below. A closet with vinyl accordion doors extends along the hallway. The hallway opens into the bedroom to the south, located above the living room. The door opening is simple, with a plain painted door with no hardware. A pair of one-over-one-light windows is on the south wall in the squared dormer, situated above a built-in window seat. The ceilings slope at the hip roof of the dormers. There are sloped recesses on either side of the dormer walls. A plain wood baseboard matches the other upper bedrooms, as do the modern ceiling fixtures. All upstairs flooring is hardwood with the exception of the half bath.

The basement is entered from the southerly end of the first floor back hall, through a five-panel door. The stairway has a simple round wood handrail, with brass mounts; twelve risers covered in linoleum lead to the basement, which is mostly open.

The basement has a concrete floor and the ceiling under the dining room is covered in acoustical tile; walls are parged and partially paneled. To the west of the stairway is a laundry room with tubs, and a parged brick wall to the east. On the north wall near the west corner is the original door with a diagonal brace to the garage, now fixed in place. A wide beadboard wall runs to the west of the door and ends at the latched door to the garage, which is also clad in wide beadboard.

The basement under the west half of the living room features a concrete wall covered in burlap. An oil furnace is located east of the stairs, connected to the central chimney.

The garage is located under the kitchen, hall, and bathroom, and runs the full width of the house. The outer walls in the garage are parged, and the ceiling is beadboard, as is the interior wall. A pair of garage doors, with six glass lights above and three vertical panels below, is on the east wall. Wire is mounted over the glass.

The basement is where the mimeograph machine was located that was used by Verdell and Otto Rutherford to print thousands of NAACP meeting minutes and notices and the Bethel AME Church bulletins.

ALTERATIONS

Alterations to the house are well-documented: in November 1927 a new furnace was installed; in the summer of 1929, a 12' x 18' garage was built beneath the house, accessed at the northwest corner with a pair of garage doors with six lights above and three vertical panels below; and in August 1930 and the late 1940s, the main floor bathroom was upgraded. A curb was cut and a concrete driveway was installed to the property line. A 2" tongue-and-groove wall was built separating the garage from the rest of the basement. A concrete floor was poured at that time.

In the spring of 1936, after Otto and Verdell married and returned to the house, the original recessed entry porch was enclosed, doubling the size of the living room, to meet the need for additional living space. Leaded-glass windows, with a fixed center window flanked by two casements windows, were installed in the new wall on the east half of the front (south) façade. At that time, the windows in the polygonal bay in the west half, including the fixed center light, and flanking one-over-one-light double-hung windows, were also replaced with matching leaded-glass windows in existing openings.

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Also in 1936, a new projecting entry with Classical details was added with a simple gable with an elliptical-arch soffit supported by two square, paneled posts and engaged pilasters to each side of the new paneled door. The beveled siding was covered with asbestos shingles. A large exterior brick chimney was added at the east wall, near the southeast corner, for the new fireplace in the enlarged living room. The design work and plans were executed by Donald Rutherford, Otto Rutherford's younger brother and an engineer by training. On the interior, the half-wall foyer and partition wall were removed and a brick fireplace with mantel and brick hearth was added. The coved ceiling, picture molding, and base were all exactly duplicated in the newly enlarged living room. In the upstairs, hardwood floors were installed. All of the alterations were completed during the historic period and are of exceptional quality.

In the 1950s, the original interior basement door to the rear of the garage was sealed when a washer and dryer were installed. The large, open upper story was divided into three bedrooms, and a closet with accordion doors was added along the west wall under the eaves.

In March of 1987, the house was firebombed in an incident determined to be the mis-identification of the location of a drug-related conflict. Primary damage was to the rear of the house. Roof framing was repaired on the north roof dormer and north wall. The screened-in rear (north) porch was enclosed and a metal door was installed, the bathroom cabinets were replaced, the kitchen sink was replaced and new aluminum windows were installed in the north roof dormer. In the breakfast nook at the north wall, the pair of windows at the east wall above the kitchen sink was replaced with aluminum windows in the original frames, and new vinyl flooring with a rubber base was added in the kitchen.

In April of 1999, the house was re-roofed with new composition shingles, the leaded-glass windows were fully restored, and the interior basement walls and the entry porch columns were repaired.

CONCLUSION

The 1920 photograph of the Rutherford House shows that it was a classic early bungalow that retained vestiges of the Victorian era in the bay windows and steeply pitched hip roof. The overall horizontal emphasis of the house, however, and the recessed porch and broad entry stairs, presaged the later widely popular Craftsman bungalow, which eschewed some of the Victorian-era features. Later changes to the house removed some of the character-defining features of the bungalow. These changes, however, occurred within the historic period and were undertaken by the Rutherford family. Further, the building, which is significant under Criterion B, retains its overall form, character-defining bay windows, and front-facing hip roof dormer; in short, its integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. The house still conveys the reasons for its significance.

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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, object, 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.)

Social History

Ethnic Heritage/Black

Period of Significance

1936-1953

Significant Dates

1936, Date of Otto Rutherford's marriage,
return to the house, and beginning of
life of activism

1953, Passage of the Oregon Civil Rights Bill

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Rutherford, Otto G.

Rutherford, Verdell Burdine

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Joseph Tremblay, builder (attributed)

Period of Significance (justification) The Period of Significance extends from 1936, when Otto and Verdell Rutherford moved into the house that Otto grew up in after their marriage and began their lives of activism, to 1953, the date of the passage of Oregon's Civil Rights bill, which occurred under Otto and Verdell Rutherford's leadership of the NAACP, during the time that Otto Rutherford was president of the Portland chapter of the NAACP and Verdell was secretary. The passage of this key legislation represents a culmination of their most active roles in the Civil Rights movement. They lived in the house until 1999.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Otto G. and Verdell B. Rutherford House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A, Social History, for its place in Portland's Albina neighborhood, the center of Portland's Civil Rights movement in the twentieth century. The Rutherford house is literally where meetings occurred, strategies were honed, letters were written, and posters and fliers created to promote key legislation supporting the movement. It is also eligible under Criterion B, Ethnic Heritage/Black, in recognition of Otto and Verdell's longtime leadership in this movement. The house, which is now owned by a third generation member of this activist family, was the only place where the senior William H. Rutherford could buy a residence, due to exclusionary practices in Portland aimed at "Negros and Orientals," in the 1920s. In the twentieth century, Albina was where the African American community lived, where their social institutions were located, including the NAACP, and where activism took place. Activism was sparked by poor housing conditions in the neighborhood, on-going discrimination, and repeated impacts by large public projects that cleared entire neighborhoods in the second half of the twentieth century. Otto and Verdell Rutherford were at the heart of this activism and played a critical role. They excelled in laying the ground work and maintaining the key relationships necessary to promote social change. Their efforts finally came to fruition with the 1953 passage of Oregon's Public Accommodations Act, commonly known as the Civil Rights Act, under Otto Rutherford's leadership as president of the Portland NAACP and Verdell's important supporting role as secretary.

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

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN EARLY OREGON

The following historic context, "African Americans in Early Oregon," describes the early history of African Americans in Oregon, with its integral pattern of discrimination beginning in the earliest days of the 1843 Provisional Government. It provides a narrative that sets the stage for later practices that would perpetuate this discrimination into the twentieth century.³

Early Explorers

African Americans have been a part of Oregon's history since its initial settlement by non-Natives. The first well-documented African American to travel to Oregon was Markus Lopus, a crewmember of the American ship *Lady Washington* and servant to the ship captain Robert Gray, who arrived in the state in 1788.⁴ The most widely known African American to travel to Oregon in these early days was York, William Clark's slave, who came west with the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1805.⁵ According to *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, "He played a significant role in the success of the enterprise, transporting supplies, hunting for food, participating in scouting and side trips, and constructing forts and shelters."⁶ African Americans, both slaves and freed men, also played a role in early nineteenth century settlement as mountain men, who worked with the local Natives to supply furs to the Hudson's Bay Company. Of this group, James Douglas achieved the greatest

³ There are a number of good, comprehensive resources on African American history in Portland and Oregon. They include the following: Darrell Millner's "Blacks in Oregon," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/blacks_in_oregon/; Darrell Millner's "Oregon," *Black America: A State-by-State Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, Alton Hornsby Jr., editor. ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2011; "The Oregon History Project," *Oregon Historical Society*, <http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/>; and Quintard Taylor's, *The Black Past, Remembered & Reclaimed*, <http://www.blackpast.org>. Two bibliographies on African American history in Portland and Oregon are: Lenwood G. Davis's "Sources for History of Blacks in Oregon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 3 (September 1972), pp. 197-211; and "History of African Americans in Portland & Oregon: A Selected Bibliography," *BlackPast.org Remembered & Reclaimed* <http://www.blackpast.org/history-african-americans-portland-oregon-selected-bibliography>.

⁴ Also seen as Marcus and Lopez. Lopus was subsequently killed by Native Americans at Tillamook Bay. Darrell Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/blacks_in_oregon/#.VMlJfmjF98E, accessed January 2015.

⁵ No surname was given in the texts.

⁶ Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 1. York is considered by some to be the second African American man to come to Oregon and the first to explore what would become Portland.

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status in his role as the chief factor at Fort Vancouver in the 1840s. He later served as the second governor of Vancouver Island and was the first governor of British Columbia in the 1850s and 1860s.⁷

Blacks and “The Great Migration”

African Americans, as both slaves and freed men, also came west as part of “The Great Migration” on the Oregon Trail.⁸ Settlers had varied reasons for traveling west in the 1840s, but the vast majority who immigrated to Oregon in the 1850s came to take advantage of the Donation Land Claim Act.⁹ Many settled in the Willamette Valley, attracted to its mild climate and rich soil.¹⁰ The Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 promised white and American half-breed Indian male settlers 320 acres of land on improving the land, and an additional 320 for their wives if married.¹¹ African Americans came west on the Oregon Trail as well, acting as guides or, in the case of slaves, assisting their families with the crossing. Blacks were precluded, however, from taking part in the Donation Land Claim Act.¹² Once in Oregon, if they did not work for the families they came with, they worked as laborers, barbers, cooks, blacksmiths, washerwomen or seamstresses.¹³

It is estimated that three percent of the ‘overlanders’ who headed west on the Oregon Trail before 1860 were African Americans.¹⁴ They hoped for a better life in the west, with fewer social obstacles.¹⁵ Among the more well-known African Americans who followed this path and made lives for themselves were George Washington Bush (1790-1863) and Louis Southworth (1829-1917). Bush, the son of an African American servant and an Irish maid, was a freedman and traveled with the Simmons-Gilliam wagon train in 1844 (he had previously traveled to the Pacific Coast, working as an independent trapper and later as an employee of Hudson’s Bay Company). He and Michael Troutman Simmons led a thirty-two-person party over the trail, Bush financing some of the party who could not afford the trip on their own. Rather than be subject to the Oregon Provisional Government’s discriminatory policies, he eventually settled in what is today Tumwater, Washington, where he staked a 640-acre claim.¹⁶ When the Oregon Territory, with its racist policies, was extended to include Washington State, he faced losing his land. His friends and neighbors petitioned the U.S. Congress on his behalf, and on January 30, 1855 Congress passed a special act that allowed the Bush family to retain their land.¹⁷

Southworth also immigrated to Oregon over the Oregon Trail. Born a slave, he traveled to Oregon at age 24 with his owner James Southworth. Southworth considered Louis his property and petitioned the territorial government to protect slave property.¹⁸ When the James Southworth family left for the California gold fields

⁷ Millner, “Blacks in Oregon,” 2.

⁸ Between 1840 and 1860 about fifty-three thousand people traveled west to Oregon from various points along the Missouri River. Schwantes, Carlos A., *The Pacific Northwest, An Interpretive History* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 86. Note that some Blacks also came as slaves and were subsequently freed by their owners as a condition of their assistance along the trail. And because Oregon officially did not allow slavery after 1848, some slaves stayed on with their masters as servants or farm laborers. Janice Marschner, *Oregon 1859, A Snapshot in Time* (Portland, OR: Timber Press Inc., 2008), 23.

⁹ According to historian Carlos Schwantes, the vast majority of future settlers were impoverished farmers from the Mississippi Valley and in the 1840s, the majority of emigrants were Missourians, some of whom left to escape “the virulent passions that surround the issues of race and slavery.” Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 90-91. For further discussion of the reasons behind emigrations from different parts of the country, see Marschner, *Oregon 1859*, 23.

¹⁰ More than seven thousand claimants were awarded more than 3.5 million acres in the Pacific Northwest in the five years that the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 was in place. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 103.

¹¹ Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 103. After 1850, white males over 21 years of age were granted 160 acres and if married, 320 acres. The Donation Claim Act expired in 1855. Half-breed Indians were included in order to make the offspring of early white male settlers and their Indian wives eligible for land under the Act. Millner, “Blacks in Oregon,” 2.

¹² Both Hawai’ians and Blacks were prohibited from taking part in this distribution of public land.

¹³ Marschner, *Oregon 1859*, 23.

¹⁴ William M. Lang, “The Oregon Trail,” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/oregon_trail/#.VMq6OWjF98E, accessed January 2015. The 2,000 mile Oregon Trail extended from Independence, Missouri to first The Dalles and then the Willamette Valley.

¹⁵ Land, “The Oregon Trail,” http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/oregon_trail/#.VMq6OWjF98E

¹⁶ Research did not reveal the source of his land claim.

¹⁷ Don Sederstrom, “George Washington Bush (1791-1863),” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/bush_george_washington_1790_1863_1863_/#.VMq5A2jF98E, accessed January 2015.

¹⁸ Oregon laws prohibited slavery but as noted, owners considered slaves their property. This issue would continue to be controversial in Oregon’s settlement era.

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with Louis, Louis began playing his violin for money and by 1858 had raised \$1,000, enough to purchase his freedom. He at first lived on the Donation Land Claim of Benjamin Richardson, since he was not allowed to apply for his own land. The Homestead Act of 1862 did not prohibit blacks from owning land, however, and in 1879 he and his family homesteaded in the Alsea Valley in Benton County, Oregon. In his later life he ran a livery stable, worked as a blacksmith, built a sawmill, operated a ferry, and continued to play his fiddle.¹⁹

Early Exclusion Laws

While African Americans were a part of and achieved success in early exploration and settlement of the Oregon Country, discrimination against African Americans has been an integral part of the state's history since its founding. The Provisional Government of Oregon was established on May 2, 1843 and remained in place for six years, until May 3, 1849.²⁰ The accompanying Organic Laws of Oregon were adopted to carry out the aims of the new government. In 1844, the legislature decreed that African Americans could not reside in the Oregon Country, the punishment for which was 20-39 lashings, to be administered every six months until the violator left the state. Never enforced, this law was repealed in July 1845. In 1848, the U.S. Congress created the Oregon Territory and Joseph Lane, a pro-slavery Democrat, was appointed by President James K. Polk as the first territorial governor. In 1849, the Territorial government adopted a second black exclusion law, which was repealed in 1853.²¹

The Oregon constitution, adopted in 1857, banned slavery but also excluded African Americans, mulattoes and Chinese from legal residence in the state.²² Under the provisions of this document, blacks were not allowed to own real estate, participate in contracts, vote, or make use of the legal system. Because of the controversy around slavery at that time, two referendums were included in the November 9, 1857 special election.²³ One rejected slavery, and the other excluded free blacks from the state. The U.S. Congress delayed admitting Oregon to the Union for two years because of the slavery issue.²⁴ These laws became effective, however, once Oregon achieved statehood on February 14, 1859.²⁵ Despite the fact that the state as a whole was anti-slavery, when Oregon was admitted to the Union, the first governor, John Whiteaker, and senators Joseph Lane and Delazon Smith were all pro-slavery.²⁶

THE RUTHERFORD FAMILY - THE FIRST GENERATION

While African Americans came to Oregon and established successful lives in the state in the mid-nineteenth century, the exclusion laws and other discriminatory measures were effective in discouraging widespread settlement. By the end of the 1860s, there were only 147 African Americans in Oregon and by 1890, there were still only 1,186 blacks in the state.²⁷ African Americans would not settle in Oregon in any significant numbers until the coming of the railroads. William H. and Edward W. Rutherford were among this second

¹⁹ Peggy Baldwin, "Louis Southworth (1829-1917)," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*,

http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/southworth_louis_1829_1917/#.VMq5YWjF98E, accessed January 2015.

²⁰ Approximately one hundred American and French-Canadian settlers gathered at the initial May 1843 meeting in Champoeg. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 97.

²¹ The Oregon Territory, created August 14, 1848, included Oregon and extended into Washington, Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming.

²² Marschner, *Oregon 1859*, 35.

²³ This coincided with the March 1857 Dred Scott decision, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Congress had no power to exclude slavery from territories like Oregon. With few exceptions "... no prominent Democrats favored slavery. In fact, few Oregonians favored any extension of slavery into the territories, but those who did were all Democrats." Kimbark E. MacColl, E. Kimbark with Harry H. Stein, *Merchants, Money & Power, The Portland Establishment, 1843-1913*. (The Georgian Press, 1988), 91.

²⁴ Republicans, who were generally pro-slavery, wished to delay the addition of a Democratic state, which Oregon was, to the Union, as Democrats – with exceptions – were generally anti-slavery. Historically most Oregonians were Democrats, most did not support slavery and most were loyal to the Union.

²⁵ Oregonians did not vote to support statehood until 1857. Historian Carlos Schwantes has posited that a driving reason behind Oregon's desire to become part of the United States was because the Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision of early 1857 allowed states – but not territories - to rule on slavery. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 104. Because of the controversy around slavery at that time, two referendums were included on the November 9, 1857 special election. One rejected slavery, and other excluded free blacks from the state, which was not repealed until 1926. Marschner, *Oregon 1859*, 35.

²⁶ Marschner, *Oregon 1859*, 36.

²⁷ U.S. census tables.

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wave of immigrants. The following history of the Rutherford family establishes the pioneering efforts of William Rutherford, Otto Rutherford's father, and his brother to find opportunities in Portland in the late 1890s, when there were few chances for African Americans to find skilled work. It follows their successful business careers, including their move to Albina, where they purchased neighboring houses, including the subject house at 833 NE Shaver Street.

William H. and Edward W. Rutherford

William H. Rutherford was born in Columbia, South Carolina in 1870, the oldest son of William H. and Cornelia Hunt Rutherford. His father, William H. Rutherford (1852-1910), was a barber from Macon, Georgia, who later became a teacher and business owner. The family was highly regarded. His father had two brothers and a sister. One was a doctor who settled in North Carolina and the second was a doctor who graduated from Howard University and moved to Oakland, California to set up practice. His sister married and moved to Mississippi. All had been emancipated from slavery through the Emancipation Proclamation. His mother, Cornelia Hunt Rutherford, was born to a Native American mother and African American father; she was born into slavery in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1851, and later emancipated.

William H. Rutherford was the oldest of the four children born to William and Cornelia Rutherford. William graduated from Allen Union School. He and his brother Edward both became barbers and operated a family-owned shop in Columbia, before moving to Portland, Oregon in the 1890s. Their brother Harry was also a barber. He eventually went into business in Columbia with his father, owning and operating a cigar factory and regalia manufacturing company. The William H. and Cornelia Rutherford House in Columbia, South Carolina, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, along with the house built in 1924 by the widow of Harry Rutherford, significant for the Rutherford family's advancement from servitude to positions of respect and prominence over three generations.²⁸

The Rutherford brothers were among the 75 black men recruited from the south to work at the Portland Hotel as barbers, waiters and in other service positions in the 1890s.²⁹ The men were enlisted by fellow Columbian and African American John C. Logan, who was the head waiter at the Portland Hotel. Logan was enlisted by his employer, Henry Villard, a German banker and newspaperman and later railroad owner, to recruit African Americans from the Carolinas with hotel experience in anticipation of the Portland Hotel's opening in 1890. A number of the members of this core group of people would go on to play important roles in Oregon's quest for equal opportunity for blacks.

The Rutherford brothers left Columbia in 1897 for new opportunities in Portland. As African Americans, they were prohibited from working in the hotel barbershop. Instead, they were private barbers in the hotel, providing haircuts and shaves in the rooms of hotel guests. Employment at the Portland Hotel was prestigious, and one of the few places in Portland that employed African Americans outside the railroads, where they often served as porters. At this time, Portland's African American population was extremely small, no more than 1,000 people.

The Rutherfords' decision to leave was undoubtedly influenced by changes in South Carolina's political and cultural atmosphere for African Americans at this time; its progressive atmosphere following Reconstruction had grown dramatically repressive in a very short time. "The relatively high wages and tips [for blacks who worked as hotel waiters and railway porters] paid to the men allowed them to send for their wives and families. They formed the nucleus of Portland's first black 'middle class' who owned modest homes, sent children to college, and maintained a refined and cohesive community."³⁰

Settling into their new hometown, the brothers obtained their certificates from the State of Oregon's Barbers Board of Examiners in 1899. Remarkably, by 1901, they were among the eight African American founders of

²⁸ National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places: Fair-Rutherford and Rutherford Houses (Columbia SC, 1984).

²⁹ Portland Bureau of Planning, *Portland's Albina Community, The History of Portland's African American Community (1805 to the Present)* (Portland, OR: Bureau of Planning, February 1993), 14.

³⁰ Portland's Bureau of Planning, *History of Portland's African American Community*, 14.

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the Enterprise Investment Company, which invested \$10,000 to buy property and in 1903, built a two-story building on North Larrabee Avenue.³¹ In 1902, William and Edward Rutherford traveled back to Columbia, South Carolina, where they married and returned with their wives to rented homes (no longer extant) on the west side of downtown Portland.

William H. Rutherford married Lottie (Charlotte Elizabeth Shannon White), who was born in Columbia, South Carolina in 1877. She and her brothers were raised in a foster home and took the name White from their foster parents. She graduated from Scotia Seminary in Columbia and arrived in Portland as a new bride at the age of 25. Two years later, in 1904, the first of four sons William H., was born, followed by a second son, Alan, in 1906.

In 1907, William and Edward left the Portland Hotel to open their first business, The Club Café Shaving Parlor, at NW 9th Avenue and Flanders Street (no longer extant). They hired a third barber and added a haberdashery line in one half of the shop, changing the business name to Rutherford Brothers Barbers and Haberdashery. In 1914, they moved the business to 414-418 NW 6th Avenue (no longer extant), at the corner of NW Broadway and Flanders, an excellent location one block from the Golden West Hotel.

The Golden West Hotel was opened by William D. Allen in 1906 as Portland's only African American hotel. It was an important gathering spot. The Rutherfords added a confectionary with an ice cream parlor to the haberdashery. Theirs was one of a dozen businesses catering to African Americans that flourished here in the early decades of the twentieth century, due to segregation laws that banned blacks from restaurants, hotels and theaters.³² The Rutherford brothers stayed at this location until 1930.

In 1910, both William and Edward, with their wives, purchased and lived in adjacent homes at SE 8th and Ash Streets (no longer extant). William and Lottie had two more sons in the 8th Street house. In 1919, seeking a house in the country for the health of a son, the William Rutherfords bought a home and moved to 8944 N. Drummond Avenue (no longer extant), where they remained until 1923.

Beginning in 1919, the Portland Realty Board adopted a provision in their Code of Ethics restricting the sale of properties to "Negros and Orientals" to the Albina District – inner north and northeast Portland - near the Steel and Broadway Bridges. A headline in *The Oregon Journal* for March 6, 1919 stated, "Realty Board Intends to Stop Sales to Negroes, Orientals," citing "the depreciation in property values . . ." ³³ A new article in the Realtors Code of Ethics called for punitive measures against agents who violated this policy. Walter Green, who purchased the Drummond Avenue and Shaver Street homes for the Rutherfords, was an African American who could "pass" for white. Active in business and real estate, he purchased properties for African Americans, which was necessary given the prohibitions against blacks buying property for themselves.

By 1922, the Rutherford family had tired of traveling the great distance to the Portsmouth District, to and from work, church, and social activities. Walter Green found a house for them at 833 NE Shaver Street, and on 1923, William and Lottie Rutherford purchased and moved into this house; Edward bought the house next door at 823 NE Shaver. In addition to serving as their home, this house would become the locus of Otto and Verdell's social and political lives from 1936 forward. The house remains in Rutherford family ownership to this day.

William H. Rutherford was a charter member of Enterprise Lodge #1, Free and Accepted Masons. Lottie Rutherford spent most of her married life raising their four sons. William and Lottie Rutherford were active members of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, to the extent that they were among a small group of church members who mortgaged their homes for the new Bethel AME Church building, constructed in 1916 at 1239 N. Larrabee.³⁴ In October 1935, Lottie Rutherford, at the age of 58, died after suffering a stroke two

³¹ This building was demolished for construction of Memorial Coliseum in 1958.

³² Portland's Bureau of Planning, *History of Portland's African American Community*, 14.

³³ John Terry, "Long-held tilt to bigotry stains state's past," *Sunday Oregonian*, February 24, 2002.

³⁴ This building was demolished in 1958 for construction of Memorial Coliseum.

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weeks earlier. William H. Rutherford remained at the home at Shaver Street, living with his son Otto and daughter-in-law Verdell after their marriage in 1936. He died in 1955 following several strokes at the age of 85. Edward Rutherford died from kidney disease in 1942. After his death his wife sold their Shaver Street home to another family member and returned to South Carolina.

The African American Community in Early Twentieth Century Portland

African Americans did not settle in Portland in any significant numbers until after the coming of the railroad.³⁵ There were two interrelated reasons for this. The main sources of jobs for blacks were working for the railroad and working at the Portland Hotel. In the 1880s, both of these enterprises were owned by German-born Henry Villard. Villard purchased the bankrupt Oregon and California Railroad Company in 1876 and proceeded to both expand and complete the system by 1887.³⁶ In 1890, he also finished the Portland Hotel, whose construction had stopped and started again throughout the 1880s. The hotel, a major source of employment for African Americans in the city, and the reasons that the Rutherfords came to Portland, "gave the city its first luxury accommodations to match those of Eastern cities."³⁷

Before completion of the railroad, blacks in Portland most commonly worked as cooks, bootblacks, and domestics. After the coming of the railroads, jobs available to them included barbers, waiters, cooks, porters, redcaps and shop laborers for the railroad or as waiters or barbers at the Portland Hotel.³⁸ The railroad as an employment source meant that a small African American community - both a residential and business community - grew up near Union Station, at the edge of Portland's commercial core. The Rutherfords were a part of this community.³⁹ The businesses here catered to the African American trade, and the Rutherford brothers chose this area to locate their new business in 1907.⁴⁰ "Black-owned businesses, such as the Rutherford Brothers' Haberdashery and Barbershop at Northwest Broadway and Flanders, catered to the prosperous community, while providing social space for that community to grow." Additional businesses in what is now called the North Broadway district included catering businesses, hotels and restaurants, clothing and furniture stores, and transfer and storage operations.⁴¹ The most prominent business and social center for the neighborhood was the 1906 Golden West Hotel, which served African American residents of Portland and traveling African American railroad workers until 1930.⁴²

Although Portland's African American community was small (Portland still had only a little more than a thousand blacks in 1890), or perhaps because it was small, it was active. As early as 1879, early Portland African Americans Allen Flowers, William H. Glasee, Henry Stone and several others formed the Portland Colored Immigrants Aid Society (PCIAS). The purpose of this organization was to 'provide aid, assistance and encouragement for black refugees from the south.'⁴³ By 1903, Portland's second African American newspaper, the *Advocate*, was founded. And by 1914, a group of over 100 African Americans established the

³⁵ Far more African Americans settled in Portland than in the small towns and rural areas. According to historian Darold Millner, this was due to land laws and racial hostility. Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 4. Reasons given for this include the lack of opportunity for blacks due to their inability to own land, the greater prejudice that existed in rural areas, and general lack of opportunity.

³⁶ The railroad was named the Oregon and California Railroad in 1869, when it was taken over by Ben Holladay. It was eventually absorbed into the Southern Pacific Railroad. The portion of the railroad through Medford and California was completed in 1883. Abbott, *Portland in Three Centuries*, 39.

³⁷ Abbott, *Portland in Three Centuries*, 69. The Portland Hotel was demolished in 1951. When it was completed in 1890, over \$1 million had been spent to construct the eight-floor, 326-room hotel. For three decades, it was the center of business and social life in the city." Oregon Black Pioneers, *African Americans of Portland*, 22.

³⁸ Oregon Black Pioneers, *African Americans in Portland*, 21. The railroad was the main employer of African Americans in Portland as late as the 1930s. A survey of black workers in 1941 revealed that over 98% worked for the railroad industry in various capacities; 1% worked in private industry and domestic service; and .4% worked in business and the professions. After 1941, the majority of blacks in the Portland area, which included thousands of newcomers to the region, worked in the ship building industry. Lenwood G. Davis, "Sources for History of Blacks in Oregon," *Oregon Historical quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 3, September 1972, 207.

³⁹ Housing was not segregated in Portland at this time, and African Americans lived throughout the city. The number who worked for the railroad and Portland Hotel, however, caused many to live near these sources of employment.

⁴⁰ They first located their business at 835 NW Flanders but moved to Broadway and Flanders in 1914. Bosco-Milligan Foundation. *Cornerstones of Community*, 35.

⁴¹ Bosco-Milligan Foundation. *Cornerstones of Community*, 11.

⁴² Bosco-Milligan Foundation. *Cornerstones of Community*, 11.

⁴³ J. D. Chandler, *Hidden History of Portland, Oregon* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2013), 87.

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Portland Branch of the National Association of Colored People (NAACP), just five years after the founding of the national organization.⁴⁴ Founders of the association included Edward D. and Beatrice Morrow Cannady, editors of the *Advocate*; Dr. James A. Merriman, the city's only African American doctor at the time; chef James Williams; tailor J. W. Miller; clerk Eugene Minor; and photographer James S. Bell.⁴⁵ Dr. Merriman was its first president and Beatrice Cannady the first secretary. This branch, Unit 1120-B, is the oldest, continuously chartered branch of the NAACP west of the Mississippi.⁴⁶

To provide a context, the following describes the work of two important civil rights workers in Portland at this time, the time in which the Rutherford brothers were investing in property, building their businesses, and raising their families.

Beatrice Morrow Cannady (-1974) became one of the key early figures in the struggle for equal rights in Portland's black community. Cannady was the first black female to practice law in Oregon after graduating in 1922 from Portland's Northwestern College of Law.⁴⁷ She married E. D. Cannady, one of the Columbia, South Carolina men who were brought out to work as waiters at the Portland Hotel. Other founders of the newspaper were Portland Hotel barber **Edward Rutherford**; hotel waiter McCants Stewart; John C. Logan; William H. Bolds; A. Ballard; and Reverend Carey F. B. Moore. Cannady was the first secretary or possibly vice-president and Edward was head of the executive committee.⁴⁸ According to her biographer, "Soon after her marriage, Cannady joined the *Advocate* as an associate editor and manager and apparently assumed most of the responsibility for running the weekly newspaper."⁴⁹ At the 26th anniversary of the paper her husband credited her with the on-going success of the paper. After they divorced in 1930, she took over as publisher.

The *Advocate* had a national following, as well as serving as a unifying force for Oregon's African American community.⁵⁰ "From 1903 until 1937, thousands of people relied on the weekly newspaper for articles and editorials about segregation, lynching, employment opportunities, the NAACP, and other issues." Otto Rutherford recalled nearly four decades after the final issue hit the streets that, "The paper was very instrumental in keeping the black community informed, indeed so." Black Oregonians also depended on the paper for local news, including birth and death announcements, society and church news, and for information about the people who worked for the Portland Hotel: "By capturing events that are so central to the fabric of life, the *Advocate* promoted racial uplift and fostered a *real* community based on common interests, needs, desires, and culture."⁵¹ After devoting 25 years of her life to civil rights and journalism, Cannady relocated to southern California, remaining out of the public eye until her death in 1974.⁵²

Another prominent figure in Portland's early African American community was Dr. James A. Merriman.⁵³ Merriman was brought to Portland by the Union Pacific Railroad in 1903 (he graduated from Rush Medical College in 1902), because the railroad needed a black physician to care for its black workers. In addition to this work, he was a founding member and first president of the Portland NAACP. He also established a competing newspaper to the *Advocate*, the *Portland Times*, which he published from 1918 to 1923.⁵⁴ Merriman left Portland for Arizona in 1931, and was replaced by African American physician Dr. DeNorval

⁴⁴ The NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization, dedicated to social justice for all Americans. *NAACP Portland Branch*, <http://naacp.me/2015/>, accessed February 2015. The Portland Branch is Branch 1120-B. It was chartered with 165 members.

⁴⁵ Kimberley Mangun, *A Force for Change, Beatrice Morrow Cannady and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Oregon, 1912-1936*. (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2010), 20.

⁴⁶ *Portland NAACP*, <https://portlandnaacp.wordpress.com/about/>, accessed January 2015 (blog).

⁴⁷ Mangun, Kimberley, "'As Citizens of Portland We Must Protest'" Beatrice Morrow Cannady and the African American Response to D. W. Griffith's 'Masterpiece.'" *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (Fall, 2006), 386.

⁴⁸ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 20.

⁴⁹ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 12. Cannady was also known for consistently speaking out and writing editorials protesting the portrayal of African Americans in D. W. Griffith's film, "Birth of a Nation," which made its debut in Portland on August 29, 1915 and played numerous times in the city. Mangun, "As Citizens of Portland We Must Protest," 382-409.

⁵⁰ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 39.

⁵¹ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 61.

⁵² Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 194.

⁵³ Merriman also attended Otto Rutherford's birth, although he missed the actual delivery due to snow.

⁵⁴ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 23.

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Unthank, also recruited by the Southern Pacific. Unthank (1899-1977) would remain active in the civil rights movement in Portland through the post-World War II era.

Migration to Albina

The Rutherford brothers were very successful in the first quarter of the twentieth century but like most African American businessmen, the Great Depression hit them hard. The Great Depression had a devastating economic impact on African Americans as whites began to seek jobs they had formerly disdained. And “when railroad workers lost their jobs, many black businesses that had relied on their patronage could not survive.”⁵⁵ The African American newspaper, *The Advocate*, published numerous articles on the loss of employment, including the firing of the waiters at the Portland Hotel, replaced for a time with white women.

Many African American businesses were forced to close. W.D. Allen closed the Golden West in 1930, which also affected the other African American businesses located in the building. He moved across the Willamette River to 2272 N. Interstate to the Medley Hotel (no longer extant). Waldo Bogle’s Barbershop, which had been in the Golden West, also crossed the river to 1608 N. Williams Avenue (no longer extant). The Rutherford Brothers relocated to 1608 N. Williams (no longer extant), as Rutherford’s Tonsorial, their new (and last) barbershop. The Depression forced its closure in 1934, and the brothers continued their profession by barbering for others. William Rutherford became a barber on the Union Pacific Railroad, from which he retired in the 1940s.⁵⁶ This business migration, along with the redlining policies reinforced by the Portland Realty Board, marked the end of an era in Portland, and the beginning of Albina as the center of the African American community from the 1920s through the twentieth century.

ALBINA IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The history of the Albina neighborhood, which is where the Rutherford House is located, is integral to the history of the African American community in Portland in the twentieth century and integral to Otto and Verdell Rutherford’s story. Albina was where African Americans had their businesses, particularly from the Depression on; where they lived, due to discriminatory housing policies; and where important social institutions such as the Bethel AME Church, and the Colored YMCA, were established.⁵⁷ African Americans created a community in Albina, but after only three decades, the community was again on the move. Albina was the location of large- scale public works and urban renewal projects from the 1950s on that further displaced African American residents, impacted their businesses, and decimated the community. These factors, building on rising discrimination from the 1920s through the 1940s, gave rise to the civil rights movement and fueled continued activism into the early 1980s.

Early Settlement and Development

Historically, Albina’s roots, however, were as the place where waves of immigrants from Europe worked, made their homes and established their social institutions. The original town site of Albina, which was an independent city from 1887 to 1891, was platted in 1872 along the eastern banks of the Willamette River. The earliest part of the neighborhood had been laid out in 1873 by developers who had connections with the railroad. By the early 1870s, plans were underway to build a rail connection on east side of the Willamette to Sacramento, where a transcontinental link would be achieved with the Southern Pacific. A large terminal with maintenance shops was constructed adjacent to Albina. When this developer went bankrupt, new developers purchased most of Albina in 1879, and established new industrial infrastructure. In 1880, Albina had a population of 143. By the time it was incorporated in 1887, it was home to 3,000 people. The 1889 fire in Portland caused the population to expand again. But the primary reason for its rapid growth from 1880 to 1891 was the coming of the railroads.

⁵⁵ Stan Fonseca, “Golden West Hotel,” *Oregon Encyclopedia*,

http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/#index_name=oep&search_text=golden+west+hotel, accessed February 2015.

⁵⁶ Edward Rutherford died from kidney disease in 1942. After his death his wife sold their Shaver Street home (no longer extant) and returned to South Carolina.

⁵⁷ The YMCA sold the building to the Billy Webb Elks Lodge in 1959, Fred Leeson, “Billy Webb Elks Lodge,” *Oregon Encyclopedia.org*, accessed February 2015.

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East Portland was chosen as the western terminus of a line operated by the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company (ORNC) in 1882. The arrival of the railroads caused a flurry of industrial, commercial, and residential growth in Albina. The transcontinental line was completed in 1883. A construction boom ensued as Portlanders found work in the railroad shops, the terminal, on the docks, and with other industrial operations. By 1889, several streetcar lines also served the area, including one along the North Portland peninsula to St. Johns.

Albina also became the home of William Ladd's seven-story Portland Flouring Mills, the largest milling operation in the Pacific Northwest at the time, further spurring industrial and residential development.⁵⁸ Between the ORNC and the mill, two miles of Albina's waterfront was devoted to large corporate businesses. Until the time of its incorporation, Albina's growth as a community was largely controlled by private business interests with headquarters on the west side of the river. By the late 1880s, it was the fastest growing city in Oregon. In July 1891, it was annexed to Portland, which until that point only extended as far east as the Willamette River.⁵⁹ East Portland, south of Albina, was annexed at the same time.

Upon annexation to the City of Portland in 1891, Albina covered more land than incorporated East and West Portland combined. Portland had consisted of 13.5 square miles, with a population density of 450 per square mile.⁶⁰ By 1900, with the addition of Albina, Portland's population had increased by 50 percent and its geographic area by 40 percent.

The Albina area would come to serve as a gateway for immigrants newly arriving in Portland. Beginning in the 1880s, European immigrants who settled in Albina included the Irish, Germans and Scandinavians. A strong representation from Eastern Europe, including immigrants from Italy, Greece, Hungary, Poland, and Russia, joined other established immigrants. Albina continued to absorb a growing number of immigrants relative to the rest of Portland. This concentration of immigrants would remain, even as Portland experienced a phenomenal growth rate from 1905 to 1912, due to the Lewis and Clark Exposition. It would experience another wave of immigrants as Portland's African American population began to relocate there in the 1920s and 1930s.⁶¹

The early settlers in the King neighborhood, where the Rutherfords would live beginning in the 1920s, were primarily white, middle and upper-class, with many recent immigrants from Russia, Germany, Sweden, and Poland. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (then Union Avenue) and 7th Avenue, from Shaver to Fremont Street, had so many immigrants from Russia that it was called "Little Russia," even though the immigrants were actually "Volga Germans," who had immigrated to Russia and lived along the Volga River in Russia before coming to the United States. The Volga Germans owned businesses on Union Avenue, including the Geist Shoe and Department Store, Kepp Brothers Meat and Groceries, and Weimer's Hardware and Furniture Store.

After 1910, African Americans who had been "crowded into the lower section of Northwest Portland" began to move into lower Albina, along North Russell Street west of Williams Avenue and the lower North Broadway area, near the present-day Memorial Coliseum. Blacks slowly filled in the area, moving north and east, while some European transplants moved farther north and east. "The housing in the Albina neighborhoods was affordable, the transportation system was good, and men could find jobs as railroad porters and in the railroad shops."

⁵⁸ *History of the Albina Plan Area*. Portland, OR: Portland State University, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Comprehensive Planning Workshop, Winter 1990.

⁵⁹ East Portland, south of Albina, was annexed at the same time. Albina was referred to as the north and inner northeast part of the city.

⁶⁰ *History of the Albina Plan Area*, 7.

⁶¹ The former city of Albina, which was annexed to Portland in 1891, is commonly known as lower, central, or upper Albina. The King neighborhood, to which the Rutherfords moved in 1923, is in central east Albina. It is generally bounded by NE Rodney Avenue (west), NE 10th Avenue (east), NE Fremont Street (south), and NE Ainsworth Street (north.) It was named after the Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, which opened in 1913 as Highland School and was renamed for Dr. King in 1968. The subject property is located in the southern portion of the King neighborhood.

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Albina's Evolution in the 1920s and 1930s

The Portland Realty Board's redlining policies, established in 1919, confined real estate sales to African Americans to the Albina neighborhood, causing Portland's African American community to relocate to the Albina area in increasing numbers in the early twentieth century.⁶² The area in which they were forced to find housing was generally bounded by the Willamette River to the west, Union Avenue to the east, and Fremont Street to the north. The Rutherford brothers bought their home in the King neighborhood of Albina shortly after the restrictive policies were put in place.⁶³ They moved their business to the Williams Avenue area of east Portland in 1930, joining a number of other African American businessmen who created a lively commercial center here. Social institutions were also established to support the local community.

Discrimination against African Americans in Oregon was growing in this time frame. "During the 1920s, discrimination was commonplace in public venues. Otto Rutherford, president of the Portland NAACP in the 1950s, recalled that whites-only signs were displayed prominently in most downtown eateries."⁶⁴ Oregon also witnessed a resurgence of Ku Klux Klan activity at this time. Otto Rutherford's statement in his oral history that Oregon was a Klan state has been often quoted.⁶⁵ Historian Kimberley Mangun, in her biography of African American activist and journalist Beatrice Morrow Cannady, stated that "By the end of 1923 Oregon reported fifty-eight chartered klavers in the state; seven more chapters had provisional charters. As many as fifty thousand white men in Oregon may have taken the oath of allegiance during the decade."⁶⁶ Historian Darrell Millner made the following observation on the role of the Klan in this decade:

By the 1920s, Oregon had a well-established and well-earned reputation as a hostile and dangerous place for blacks. That reputation was solidified by the presence in the state of the largest Ku Klux Klan chapter west of the Mississippi River. The power of the Klan was based on the political influence of its leaders, the potential for economic coercion of whites who did not support Klan ideology, and the awareness that the Klan would not hesitate to use violence to enforce its dictates . . . Walter Pierce was elected governor in 1923 with KKK support; from 1932 to 1942, he was Oregon's congressman in the US House of Representatives.⁶⁷

In Beatrice Canady's biography, historian Kimberley Mangun noted, ". . . Negroes living in Oregon in the 1920s endured a decade of prejudice, segregation, and wanton acts of violence."⁶⁸ A positive benefit of segregation and discrimination, however, was the "creation of a small but talented African American professional class. These same circumstances also laid the foundation for an emerging African American middle class with a vision of future progress and a commitment to home buying, the building of institutions, and education for their children."⁶⁹ In addition to the businesses along Williams Avenue and vicinity, institutions that grew up in the Albina area included churches, such as the Rutherfords' Bethel AME Church (no longer extant) and the Colored YMCA (still standing at 6 N Tillamook Street), which also provided meeting space for the NAACP, the Urban League, Congress of Racial Equality, the Oregon Association of Women's Club, and political and youth club activities.⁷⁰ It served as the United Service Organization (USO)

⁶² This restrictive policy would remain in place into the mid-1950s. Where blacks in Portland could live was also enforced by restrictive covenants. Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 5. As late as 1955, the Portland Realty Board acknowledged that its 360 members followed a 'code of ethics which prohibits them from selling houses in white districts without the consent of the neighbors.'"

⁶³ Lottie and William Rutherford actually spent an intervening year at a house at 8944 N. Drummond, which they bought because they thought the location would be beneficial for the health of their son.

⁶⁴ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 18.

⁶⁵ L. A. Barrie, Oral history interview with Otto G. Rutherford (transcript). (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society (1976)). Also quoted in Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 146.

⁶⁶ Mangun, *A Force for Change*, 146.

⁶⁷ Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 5. See also Rudy Pearson, "'A Menace to the Neighborhood,' Housing and African Americans in Portland, 1841-1945," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, Vol. 102, No. 2, Summer, 2001), 160. This quote continues: "During the 1920s, the primary targets of the KKK in Oregon were Catholics and Jews, not blacks. The decades of exclusionary practices had been so successful in keeping the black population small and isolated that blacks were a secondary target. Still, the Klan was a visible and intimidating force in Oregon politics and society, and it was not uncommon for KKK members to parade through city street in full regalia - displays that were often followed by torchlight rallies and public cross burnings."

⁶⁸ Mangun, *A Force for Change*.

⁶⁹ Bosco-Milligan Foundation *Cornerstones of Community*, 34.

⁷⁰ Leeson, "Billy Webb Elks Lodge," n.p.

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during World War II; Red Cross Headquarters after the Vanport Flood, providing for the needs of displaced African American families; and the Billy Webb Elks Lodge, beginning in 1959.

Due to the lack of a public accommodation law, the black community in Albina also sought non-traditional locations for institutions and businesses. Beatrice Cannady, for example, organized the Race Conference as a summit between blacks and whites to discuss race at the downtown Public Library.⁷¹ Typically, the African American community utilized each other homes for businesses and social gatherings.⁷² For example, the Portland NAACP Branch 1120-B met in the Rutherford home, as well as the Colored YMCA, until it relocated to Williams Avenue. The NAACP Credit Union, established in 1955, was also located in the Rutherford home.⁷³ The "Get Acquainted Club" met at Leonard and Lucille Crosswhite's home on Division Street (still extant) for several decades, where they also discussed race issues.⁷⁴ And the Esperanto Breakfast Club, where the members studied African American history among other topics, met at members' houses.⁷⁵ African Americans settled in Albina and built a community.

THE RUTHERFORD FAMILY - THE SECOND GENERATION

The William H. Rutherford family moved to Albina in 1923, where they bought the ca 1905 house at 833 NE Shaver Street. William's brother Edward bought the house next door at 823 NE Shaver. Otto Rutherford was 11 when the Rutherfords, with their four sons, moved to the Shaver Street house, in the King neighborhood of Albina. At this time the neighborhood was primarily white, made up of German and Russian immigrants.

The Rutherford Sons

William H. and Charlotte (Lottie) Rutherford had four sons. The Rutherfords provided a stable and nurturing environment for their sons, evidenced by the boys' accomplishments in life. They also placed a high value on education for their sons.⁷⁶ All four sons pursued higher education and established careers.

William H. Rutherford, Jr. (1904-1927) was the first son of William and Lottie Rutherford. He graduated from high school in Philadelphia, living with an aunt and uncle. He returned to Portland, working for the Portland Hotel in 1922-24, then moved back to Philadelphia and studied auto mechanics. He died prematurely in 1927, at the age of 23, from pneumonia.

Alan D. Rutherford (1906-1979) was the Rutherford's second son. He was a sickly child and his parents, in the interest of his health, moved the family to the house on North Drummond in 1919. He graduated from high school in Portland and then moved to Philadelphia, planning a teaching career. He taught school for a time and returned to Portland to attend George Fox College in Newberg, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the mid-1930s. He received his Master's Degree from Temple University in Philadelphia, and did post-graduate study at Columbia University and Peabody College in Nashville. He became a principal at Morningside High School in North Carolina in 1937, and was promoted to Assistant Superintendent in 1969. In 1971, the school board changed the name of Morningside High School to the Alan D. Rutherford School. Rutherford retired to Raleigh, North Carolina in 1972 and died there in 1979.

Otto G. Rutherford (1911-2000), the primary subject of this nomination, was William and Lottie Rutherford's third son. Otto attended Hawthorne and then Peninsula Elementary schools, as did his brothers, where they were the only African American children. When the family moved to NE Shaver Street, he attended Highland

⁷¹ Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community*, 44.

⁷² Taylor v. Cohn formalized racial segregation in public places and services in 1906. This practice remained in place until 1953. Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 5.

⁷³ For additional discussion, see Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community*, 45-53. The Credit Union moved to 2752 N Williams in 1957. In 1964, it was co-located at another location on Williams Avenue, with the new Portland NAACP offices, which also included also included a voter registration office. "NAACP Portland Chapter 50th Anniversary Celebration, 1964," *African American History in Oregon*. Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society,

⁷⁴ Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community*, 47.

⁷⁵ Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community*, 48.

⁷⁶ Barrie, Oral history interview with Otto G. Rutherford, n.p.

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School (now King), and graduated from the 8th grade in January 1925, the only African American in his class. As a youth, he sold the *Chicago-Defender* newspaper; among his customers were the waiters at the Portland Hotel, whom he regularly visited. Through time spent in his father's barbershop, along with the Portland Hotel, he knew many more of the established African American men than most other children; this would later yield the oral history of Portland's early African American community. In 1928, Otto graduated from Jefferson High School and moved to the Los Angeles area, where he worked as a chauffeur for a year in Montecito, outside of Santa Barbara. He then attended Los Angeles Junior College for two years, studying psychology, and UCLA for one year.⁷⁷

In 1933, he returned to Portland and went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad, where he was employed for 13 years. In 1936, he married Verdell Burdine Rutherford and they began their family. About 1940 he went to work for the Dehen Knitting Company, where he worked for about 20 years. Rutherford was always an activist. While working for Union Pacific Railroad, in 1937, he organized himself and nine others as the Dining Car Cook and Waiters Union.⁷⁸ In his position as a knitter at the Dehen Knitting Company, he organized the plant under the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.⁷⁹ According to Rutherford, he was then forced out through continual reduction of his hours until he quit the company. In 1966, he was appointed the Director of Housing for the Office of Economic Opportunity program, a job made possible in the Johnson administration, and in the 1970s he became the first executive director of the Urban League's Senior Adult Service Center, where he worked actively toward creating better housing for the Albina neighborhood.⁸⁰

Otto was also active in theatrical productions, acting and singing in the Portland Black Repertory Theater, the Civic Theater, and religious productions of St. Philip's Episcopop Church.⁸¹ In addition to the many political organization he was active in, Rutherford was also a member of Grand Lodge of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and the Billy Webb Elks Lodge, the "longest standing black-owned building of Portland's African American community."⁸²

Thomas Donald Rutherford (1913-2012) was the fourth and last son of William and Lottie Rutherford. After his birth Lottie Rutherford was not in good health and two-year old Donald (as he was known) went to live with family friends for a time. He attended Highland School (now King) and graduated from Benson High School. Mechanically gifted from childhood, he was renowned for inventions and technical accomplishments, such as stage lighting for church productions and rebuilding family appliances. During high school, he worked selling newspapers at Union Station.

Following graduation in 1932, he worked for four years at the Portland Hotel, and then attended Fisk University for one year in 1936. He transferred to the University of California at Berkeley for a year in 1937, and then to the Oregon State University, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering. During World War II, Donald worked at Douglas Aircraft as a tool designer and after the war, from 1945 to 1957, he worked for the Howard Hughes Tool Company in their Aircraft Division in Culver City, California, where he was a member of the Spruce Goose's first and only flight. He was the only African American of the eighteen-member crew. He retired from his later private practice, Rutherford Associates Engineers, and lived in Marina Del Ray, California. Donald invented and holds patent rights on the touch latch (a metallic cabinet door closure) and the sliding door design for Volkswagen buses.

⁷⁷ Barrie, Oral history interview, n.p. Rutherford stated in his oral history interview that it was difficult to stay in college during the Depression and he did not finish his degree for financial reasons.

⁷⁸ Oz Hopkins, "Black family here reflects," *Oregon Journal*, February 2, 1977.

⁷⁹ Rutherford was pictured in a *Sunday Oregonian* article on September 14, 1947, entitled, "Portland Negroes Dent Employment Line," with a subtitle, "Several Occupy Positions Ordinarily Closed To Members of Their Race, Survey Shows." Otto is described as a machine operator and salesman at the mill.

⁸⁰ Hopkins, "Black family here reflects." Barret, Erin Hoover, "Civil rights champion Otto Rutherford dies," (obituary), *Oregonian*, August 18, 2000.

⁸¹ Barrie, Oral history interview, n.p.

⁸² This building was formerly the Colored YMCA, at 6 Tillamook Street.

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Verdell Burdine Rutherford

Verdell Burdine Rutherford (1913-2001), the wife of Otto Rutherford and the second primary subject of this nomination, was born on January 1, 1913, in Wainwright, Oklahoma (Indian Territory), the daughter of Margaret Boles (1885-1986), and Earl Burdine, Sr. (1881-1928). Margaret Boles was born and raised in Arkansas, and Earl Burdine was a freedman from Kansas. Verdell was the third of seven children. The Burdine family moved to Coos Bay (then Marshfield), Oregon when she was six weeks old. Mrs. Burdine, an elementary school teacher for the Creek Nation, was determined to move to a locale with no danger of tornados. In 1920, the family moved to Union Gap, Washington, and a short time later to Yakima, Washington. A barber by trade, Earl Burdine turned to farming in Oregon and Washington.⁸³ On December 31, 1928, Earl Burdine died, leaving his wife to raise the seven children.

Verdell Burdine graduated from Yakima High School in 1931. She moved to Portland, joining her older sister Dolores at the home of their aunt, Lula Gragg, a close friend of Lottie Rutherford. The Burdine sisters had visited Portland often and were well-acquainted with Portland's African American community. They attended Bethel AME Church and participated in church, social, and other community activities. Verdell worked for a family that moved to San Francisco in 1933. Having ended a marriage engagement, she relocated with the family and remained in San Francisco through 1935. Her on-and-off relationship with Otto Rutherford culminated in their marriage in April 1936, and their move to the house on Shaver Street.

In addition to raising three children, Verdell Rutherford worked as a secretary for 20 years for Dr. DeNorval Unthank, Portland's second African American doctor. Unthank had come to Portland in early 1930 and fought racial discrimination for most of his life. Additionally, she was secretary for the Bethel AME Church, and performed many administrative functions for the Portland NAACP in her long-time role as secretary for that organization. Verdell was active in the Oregon Association of Colored Women's Clubs (OACW), and was a long-time member and officer (including president) of the OACW's Culture Club, which sought to correct deficits in African American history in the schools and raised money for scholarships. "Under Verdell's leadership, African American women in Portland became much more actively linked to other organized women in the state through the Oregon Association of Colored Women (OACW) as well as to the national body (NACW)."⁸⁴ In 1959, she was named the OACW's Woman of the Year.

With her permanent move to Portland in 1936, Verdell developed a passion for Portland's African American history, and she devoted much of her life to its documentation and preservation. She was meticulous in her organization of photographs, newspapers, programs, pamphlets, letters, minutes, directories, and other memorabilia relating to Portland's African American history, as well as the history of the NAACP, and the founding and early years of the NAACP Credit Union, of which she was an officer.⁸⁵ As NAACP secretary from the late 1940s through 1962, she was responsible for minutes and notices, and she (along with her children) powered the mimeograph machine in the basement of the house at Shaver Street to secure community participation in and support for civil rights causes in Portland. She is acknowledged and respected as Portland's premier African American historian, and she tirelessly organized exhibits and assisted in every major effort to document, promote, and preserve the history of the African American community.⁸⁶

Verdell was immensely interested in the preservation of the Rutherford family home at 833 NE Shaver Street, and recognized its significance in Portland's African American history. She enthusiastically supported its nomination to the National Register.⁸⁷ Verdell Burdine Rutherford died on February 27, 2001, two weeks after

⁸³ Note that Washington State did not have the same prohibition on African Americans settling in the state and buying land as Oregon did.

⁸⁴ "Building Community," *Say We Are Here: Selections from the Verdell A. Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection*. Portland, OR: Portland State University, 2012.

⁸⁵ NAACP credit unions were established in Seattle, Portland and Sacramento. They made housing finance and other loans available to minority families. Quin'Nita F. Cobbins, "Smith, E., June (1900-1982); Martin Schiesl, "Canson, Virna Mae (1921-2003)," *The Black Past, Remembered & Reclaimed*, <http://www.blackpast.org>, accessed February 2015.

⁸⁶ The 1999 draft of this nomination was written in 1999 by Cathy Galbraith, who was a close personal friend of Verdell's and continuing friend of the family.

⁸⁷ Cathy Galbraith, executive director of the Boscoe-Milligan Foundation, was a close personal friend of Verdell and wrote the first draft of this nomination, which was written when Verdell was still alive.

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suffering a heart attack, and following a stroke two years earlier. Her library and papers have been donated to Portland State University's Special Collections and University Archives by her daughter Charlotte, the present owner of the house at 833 NE Shaver Street. The PSU collection is named for her.⁸⁸

Otto and Verdell Rutherford

Otto married Verdell Burdine in Oakland, California on April 11, 1936. They were married by Reverend Daniel Hill, former pastor at Portland's Bethel AME Church, who had been transferred to Oakland in 1935. The couple then returned to Portland and to the house on NE Shaver Street to begin their married life of 64 years, decades of civil rights activism, and the documentation and preservation of Portland's African American history. The following provides a brief overview of Otto and Verdell's lives as a couple and as fellow activists in the cause of equal opportunity for Portland's African American community. Additional information about their lives and accomplishments can be found below in "The Rutherfords and the NAACP."

Otto Rutherford met Verdell Burdine when they were eight and six years old, respectively. In 1919, her family stopped in Portland to spend a Sunday during a trip from Marshfield to Yakima. The Burdines attended Bethel AME Church with friends and young Otto took Verdell to Sunday school. They were married in April 1936. Their first son, William, was born in 1937, followed by another son, Earle, in 1942, and a daughter, Charlotte, in 1947. The Rutherfords led the Portland branch of the NAACP – with Otto as president and Verdell as secretary - at a critical time. The NAACP pushed for equal opportunity and the end of racial discrimination in the 1940s and 1950s in public accommodation, employment, education, and housing in Portland and nationally. Otto Rutherford's leadership and forthright ideas on racial equality, combined with Verdell Rutherford's writing and publishing skills, provided newsletters and notices that galvanized community support.

In the early 1950s, Otto and Verdell Rutherford were among the group of activists that authored – along with the legislators that sponsored it – and persistently pushed for the adoption of Oregon's Public Accommodations Act, commonly called Oregon's Civil Rights Act.⁸⁹ They served as president and secretary, respectively, of the Portland NAACP when the bill was passed after 18 failed legislative sessions addressing this and other equal opportunity legislation, beginning in 1919.⁹⁰ Otto Rutherford advocated for its passage at state legislative sessions for many years. Otto's personal relationship with then Representative Mark O. Hatfield, who sponsored this and two previous equal opportunity acts, was no doubt instrumental in its passage.⁹¹

Otto and Verdell Rutherford's three children graduated from Jefferson High School. Their son William is in Portland, is an accomplished artist, and has two daughters. Their son Earle worked for the US Post Office; he and his wife had two sons and bought the adjacent house at 823 NE Shaver Street. Earle Rutherford drowned in an accident in 1974, at the age of 32. Their daughter Charlotte graduated from Portland State University in 1976; raising a son and a daughter, she attained a Juris Doctor degree in 1983 from Howard University and an L.L.M. degree in 1985 from Georgetown University. She worked for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund until 1992, after which she returned to Portland following her father's stroke. She retired as an Administrative Law judge for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. Otto and Verdell Rutherford lived to celebrate the attainment of the family's first Ph.D. degree; in June 2001, Charlotte Rutherford's daughter Al-Yasha Williams received her doctorate degree from Stanford University.

In 1998, Senator Hatfield visited Otto and Verdell at the house on Shaver Street to thank them personally for all of their civil rights work. The Rutherfords had met Hatfield when, as a young legislator still teaching at

⁸⁸ Personal communication between Cathy Galbraith and Charlotte Rutherford, 2001.

⁸⁹ Writing in the Oregon State Bar Bulletin, daughter Charlotte Rutherford said, "They helped to write the act and had worked for its passage as NAACP members since the late 1930s." Charlotte B. Rutherford, "Oregon Legal Heritage, Laws of Exclusion," *Oregon State Bar Bulletin*, January 2004.

⁹⁰ A Public Accommodation Act was first introduced in the state legislature in 1919.

⁹¹ In her role as secretary, Verdell's activities were primarily behind the scenes, taking care of day-to-day operations. For more information, see the video recording of a talk by Charlotte Rutherford, daughter of Otto and Verdell, made on the occasion of the opening of the exhibit, "Say We Are Here," Portland State University, November 8, 2012.

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Willamette University, he co-sponsored the civil rights bill. They remained lifelong friends.⁹² Senator Hatfield was quoted in Otto Rutherford's front page obituary in the August 18, 2000 issue of the *Oregonian*, saying, "He was gentle as a dove for peace, fierce as a warrior for justice....he was made of steel." On December 4, 2000, *The Oregonian* published a feature on Oregon's 150 most influential people in the years 1850 to 2000. The list included Otto Rutherford and a photograph of Otto and Verdell Rutherford.

In later years, Portland grew to recognize the importance of the city's, and Oregon's, African American history, and began to rectify its foundation of black exclusion laws and other racist practices. As a result, Otto and Verdell Rutherford finally began to see broader recognition of their accomplishments. A resolution recognizing those accomplishments was presented in the Oregon Legislature in the spring of 2001. Otto and Verdell Rutherford instilled in their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren the importance of education, advocacy for civil rights and equal opportunity, and the importance of their family heritage. This heritage was formally recognized and shared with the public with the formal opening of the Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection at Portland State University in 2012.

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN POST-WAR PORTLAND

The Albina neighborhood became strongly associated with Portland's African American community when, beginning in 1919, the Portland Realty Board adopted a policy in their Code of Ethics restricting the sale of properties to "Negros and Orientals" to Albina. In 1948, *The Real Estate Handbook* defined as unethical "... introducing into a neighborhood a character of property or occupancy, members of any race or nationality, or any individuals whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property value in that neighborhood."⁹³ Most African Americans were forced to find housing in the area bounded by the Willamette River to the west, Union Avenue to the east, and Fremont Street to the north. The restrictive policy held until the state's first Fair Housing Act, which disallowed refusal to rent or sell to a person because of race, religion, color or national origin, adopted in 1957. The impacts of this early policy and subsequent events led to Albina's central role in the civil rights movement and the Rutherfords active place within it.

The Changing Landscape

The onset of World War II and the development and expansion of defense industries in the Portland area changed the racial composition of the region, as African Americans in large numbers were brought to the area to work in the Kaiser shipyards and related industries. The African American population of Portland was 2,000 in 1940, out of a total population of 340,000 people.⁹⁴ It grew from this figure to 22,000 by 1944.⁹⁵ Racial tensions between blacks and whites in Portland were exacerbated by the influx of newcomers. About 72,000 workers from all over the country flooded the city, seeking promised work and good wages. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, and under the auspices of Portland's discriminatory policies, not to mention attitudes, they did not find housing. Portland's Mayor Earl Riley was quoted at the time as saying that, "Portland can absorb only a minimum of Negroes without upsetting the city's regular life."⁹⁶

Many of the African Americans who came for work were eventually housed in Vanport, an enormous housing complex located north of Portland, beyond the city limits, on the Columbia River.⁹⁷ At its peak, Vanport was

⁹² Mark O. Hatfield's (1922-2011) career began as an Oregon state legislator, elected in 1950 when he was a professor at Willamette University. He went on to become Secretary of State, served two terms as Oregon State Governor, and was elected a US Senator from Oregon in 1966, where he served as chair of the Appropriations Committee from 1981 to 1987 and 1995 to 1997. A Republican, Hatfield was "widely recognized for his principled and often controversial stands on many issues, as well as for his ability to work with his colleagues of both parties." He played a major role in Oregon and national politics in the second half of the twentieth century. He retired from the Senate in 1997 and continued to teach and publish for the rest of his career. Barbara Mahoney, "Mark O. Hatfield (1922-2011)," *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/hatfield_mark_o_1922_/#.VVTyDvIVhBc, accessed May 2015.

⁹³ Darrell Millner, "The Civil Rights Movement and Oregon History." Paper presented to the National Council of Black Studies' Annual Conference, March 1985, 6.

⁹⁴ Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 161.

⁹⁵ Millner, "Blacks in Portland," 5.

⁹⁶ Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 162.

⁹⁷ Vanport was the largest World War II federal housing project in the United States ("Vanport," *BlackPast.org*). Rudy Pearson, 23

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home to over 42,000 residents, making it the second largest community in Oregon. By V-J Day, it also housed 6,000 African Americans.⁹⁸ The complex was constructed by shipbuilder Henry J. Kaiser to house workers for his shipyards. While the city of Portland recognized that housing was an issue, their lack of responsiveness led Kaiser to purchase 648 acres of land outside the city limits and begin construction of Vanport in 1942. And despite the fact that the complex was built with Federal funds, which meant that housing discrimination was prohibited, and the fact that the complex was outside city limits, de facto segregation prevailed. African Americans were housed in only three of Vanport's 50 buildings and Vanport was one of only two public housing projects in the Portland area that accepted any blacks.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, it was a vast improvement over the total lack of available housing to African Americans who came to Portland to work in wartime industries in the years prior to 1942.

Another large concentration of 5,000 African Americans lived in Guild's Lake Court, on the former grounds of the Lewis and Clark Exposition, just northwest of Portland. Others lived in Vancouver, Washington, as Washington State did not have the same discriminatory policies as Oregon. While it was intended that these complexes be vacated after the war, housing shortages (and some say the lack of desire to integrate the African American population into Portland proper) meant that the developments continued to be used. On May 30, 1948, a massive flood destroyed Vanport, rendering 18,500 people homeless and causing more than \$100 million in damage.¹⁰⁰ With the flood came an immediate need to house those made homeless within the Portland area. Some African Americans were accommodated at Guild's Lake, but a campaign led by the Portland Chamber of Commerce continued to push for the demolition of housing at Guild's Lake and the construction of new industrial development; it was in fact partially demolished by the time that former residents of Vanport sought housing there.¹⁰¹

As a result, the African American community's primary option was to seek housing in Albina, the only neighborhood within which they could live in Portland.¹⁰² This was to have a tremendous impact on the neighborhood, further stressing a community whose African American population would grow from 1,600 in 1940 to 4,500 in 1950. The flood, however, helped lead Portland into an era of change in both its physical and social landscape and force it to confront its growing racial diversity.¹⁰³ In the words of historian Rudy Pearson:

Despite its short life span, Vanport helped create several 'firsts' for Oregon and the Portland area. The first black teachers and policemen in the state were hired in Vanport during the war years. The Vanport Interracial Council worked to establish a Portland office of the Urban League. Vanport College was the precursor to Portland State University where many veterans used the GI Bill to get a new start on life. In the end, Vanport became part of the story of civil rights and African Americans in the West.¹⁰⁴

Such organizations as the League of Women Voters, the Vanport Tenants League, and the Portland Urban League continued to criticize the Housing Authority of Portland, city leaders, business owners, and realtors, and push for housing reform. "At the end of the 1940s, Portland's African American community, though still

"Vanport, Oregon (1842-1948)," *BlackPast.org*, <http://www.blackpast.org/>, accessed February 2015. Note that accounts differ. Rubenstein's 1998 article on Vanport states that the unincorporated city was home to nearly 40,000 people at its peak.

⁹⁸ Abbott, *Portland in Three Centuries*, 125. For more information on the growth of Vanport's population – both black and white – during the war, see Portland Bureau of Planning, *Portland's Albina Community, The History of Portland's African American Community (1805 to the Present)*. (Portland, OR: Bureau of Planning, February 1993), 74.

⁹⁹ Executive Orders 8802 and 9346 prohibited discrimination in defense industries and government, and prohibited discrimination and segregation in housing projects built with federal monies. Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 168.

¹⁰⁰ Rubenstein, "Flood of Change."

¹⁰¹ Oregon Black Pioneers, *African Americans of Portland*, 69. The last residents in Guide's Lake had left by 1952 and the property given over to industrial development. Abbott, *Portland in Three Centuries*, 118.

¹⁰² According to historian Darrell Millner, "The inner northeast area of Portland, known as the Albina District, was identified by the city's financial and political power structure as a target for black resettlement. The neighborhood was favored because of its older, less desirable housing and its proximity to both Vanport and the older black community. Further, more and more whites were leaving the city for the suburbs, and creating a black neighborhood in Albina did not interfere with or threaten that exodus." Millner, "Blacks in Oregon," 6.

¹⁰³ Rubenstein, "Flood of Change."

¹⁰⁴ Pearson, "Vanport, Oregon (1942-1948)," n.p.

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segregated, was more active politically, economically, and socially than at any time in Oregon's history. The fight for equal rights and recognition was underway."¹⁰⁵

Impacts to Albina

The need to house additional people as a result of the Vanport flood put an increasing strain on Albina. Housing conditions had suffered in the neighborhood due to lack of investment during the Depression and war years. Unlike other west coast cities, Portland did not establish a public housing authority or create public housing during the New Deal era.¹⁰⁶ According to Rudy Pearson, in the 1930s a small group of businessmen and public officials in Portland "ran the affairs of the city to suit personal political and financial purposes. In the years preceding the war, [prominent businessman Chester A.] Moores and other realtors successfully and consistently opposed all attempts to increase property taxes, establish housing and zoning codes, or allow public services to infringe on private interests."¹⁰⁷

In the following decade of the 1940s, Portland did not invest in housing in the city due to the Portland Realty Board's perception that building new public or new permanent housing was not profitable.¹⁰⁸ The new public housing built to house African American workers was outside the city, in Vanport and Guild's Lake, and was not intended to be permanent. By the late 1950s, Portland's disinvestment in the Albina area, lack of capital for mortgages and home improvements, and high unemployment among young African American men had created what was being called Portland's Negro ghetto. The "ghetto" would soon be targeted for federally funded urban renewal projects, beginning with the South Auditorium Area (the Memorial Stadium area).

Albina's business infrastructure also suffered after the 1940s. As has been seen, numerous African American businesses relocated to the lower Williams Avenue area during the Depression, reflecting diminished business opportunities in downtown Portland. Some, such as the Rutherford brothers' barber shop, subsequently went out of business. By the late 1950s, this formerly thriving business district would be decimated by demolitions and the displacement made necessary to make way for publicly funded, large scale construction and urban renewal projects.

Transportation projects also impacted Albina's commercial centers. Union Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way), a major north-south arterial five blocks east of Williams Avenue, had long served as the major commercial street for the neighborhood. It also went into decline after the 1940s. The street had thrived as a commercial center for Albina in the 1920s, but was widened in 1929. This project resulted in the removal of some buildings and the facades of others. Union Avenue became an "auto-row," but nonetheless continued to serve neighborhood residents with a variety of local businesses. Residences fell to commercial development or vacant lots. When Interstate Avenue opened and through traffic was diverted to this street, support for commercial development along Union Avenue lessened and through-traffic increased congestion and engendered safety concerns. In 1967, Union Avenue was impacted by two days of racial violence that resulted in vandalism of the street between NE Fremont and NE Beech Streets, making the economic viability of the Avenue even grimmer. The city created the Union Avenue Redevelopment Plan in the late 1960s, which was implemented - after years of discussion - in 1973. On-street parking was removed and median strips added, further undermining businesses in the area.

In addition to the need to absorb African Americans made homeless made by the Vanport flood or otherwise seeking improved housing opportunities, Albina was impacted over time by three large public construction projects, which further decreased available housing and displaced local businesses. Demolition began in 1958 to clear 476 dwellings, including 224 belonging to "non-whites," to build Memorial Coliseum in what is now the Rose Quarter, in the southern portion of the Albina neighborhood.¹⁰⁹ Businesses along the formerly thriving

¹⁰⁵ Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 178. The Portland Urban League was established in 1945.

¹⁰⁶ Portland turned down Federal assistance in 1938 and Portland did not establish a public housing authority, Housing Authority of Portland, until December of 1941. Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 165.

¹⁰⁷ Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 165.

¹⁰⁸ Pearson, "A Menace to the Neighborhood," 165. When Portland finally did establish a Housing Authority, they elected Moores as its chair, "ensuring that self-serving interests and exclusionary practices would continue."

¹⁰⁹ Construction of the Memorial Coliseum also caused the destruction of the Bethel AME Church, which was very important to the

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Williams Avenue were also impacted. The construction of Interstate 5 in the 1960s impacted the Eliot, Boise and Humboldt neighborhoods in Albina and displaced businesses and residents.¹¹⁰ And in the 1970s, the Emanuel Hospital Urban Renewal Project was undertaken. For this expansion project, 33 blocks were cleared, forcing the relocation of many of the neighborhood's African American families from Lower and Central Albina. Due to the discontinuation of federal funding, the land was left vacant for many years, worsening the economic blight in the area.¹¹¹ Lastly, construction of the Fremont Bridge ramps to I-5 further impacted the southern end of Albina.

After the Vanport flood, Albina had been forced to accommodate more residents, without a commensurate investment in building stock and maintenance. As public works projects impacted the neighborhood, it was forced to accommodate more people in a smaller geographic area with less housing stock. For example, the Eliot Neighborhood would lose half of its residents and 1,379 units of housing to public programs between 1958 and 1972.¹¹² In 1962, the city of Portland completed the Central Albina Study, which concluded that the area was in an advanced state of urban blight and targeted more blocks for clearance.¹¹³ Neighborhood residents strongly objected to plans for yet more demolition. Clearances had caused residents to lose equity built up through property ownership, as people were forced to start over in other locations. The clearances also forced many businesses to close. Tensions continued to rise.

The Rise of the Civil Rights Movement

All these factors: increased housing discrimination in the 1920s; economic issues in the 1930s; the influx of large numbers of African Americans new to the city in the 1940s; the need to house more people in Albina in the 1950s; the lack of investment in the neighborhood continuing into the 1960s; and resultant rising racial tensions, instilled new energy and rising impetus to the civil rights movement in the post-war era. The rise of the civil rights movement at this time can be attributed to the on-going perseverance of activists such as the Rutherfords to join together, organize, engage constituents, and challenge the prevalent power structure in Portland in the name of change. Other prominent players in the movement at this time included Dr. DeNoval Unthank (1899-1977); Edwin C. (Bill) Berry (1910-1987); and Kathryn Bogle (1906-2003).

Dr. DeNoval Unthank was a physician who moved to Oregon when he was recruited by the Union Pacific Railroad in 1929 to replace the retiring Dr. James A. Merriman. When Merriman moved to Arizona in 1931, Unthank became the only black physician in Portland. Throughout the 1930s Unthank served blacks – who were not allowed to receive treatment in hospitals – whites, and any minority group.¹¹⁴ When he and his family first moved to Portland, they were forced to relocate four times, due to harassment, before finding a home on SE 29th Street, where they “could live peacefully.” In part as a result of the discrimination he experienced, he became politically active: “Witness to and the victim of rampant discrimination, Unthank began to devote much of his energy to improving race relations in Portland, leveraging his position as a trusted professional to speak out about discriminatory practices.”¹¹⁵ When African Americans in unprecedented numbers came to Portland for jobs with Kaiser shipbuilding, they were excluded from membership in the Boilermakers Union, and assigned the least desirable jobs, another cause of racial tension. In response to this situation, Unthank led a group, formed in 1940, called the Emergency Advisory Council, which sought to force local government to provide equal opportunity to wartime employment and business contracts.

African American community, including the Rutherfords. Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community*, 99.

¹¹⁰ William Toll, “Portland Neighborhoods, Race and Progressive Resistance,” *The Oregon History Project*, http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/narratives/subtopic.cfm?subtopic_ID=220, accessed January 2015.

¹¹¹ Toll, “Portland Neighborhoods, Race and Progressive Resistance,” n.p. Tania Hyatt-Evensen, Sarah Griffith and Amy E. Platt, “Albina Residents Picket the Portland Development Commission, 1973,” *The Oregon History Project*, http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/historical_records/dspDocument.cfm?doc_ID=0004CBF8-16F2-1ECD-A42A80B05272006C, accessed May 2015.

¹¹² Bosco-Milligan Foundation, op. cit.

¹¹³ The Albina plan area was bounded by Fremont Street to the north; Union Street to the east; Broadway to the south and Interstate Avenue to the west. Portland Bureau of Planning, *Portland's Albina Community*, 110

¹¹⁴ Rudy Pearson, “UnThank, Dr. DeNoval (1899-1977),” *The Black Past, Remembered & Reclaimed*, <http://www.blackpast.org/>, accessed February 2015.

¹¹⁵ Piasecki, Sara, “DeNorval Unthank (1899-1977),” *The Oregon Encyclopedia*.

http://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/unthank_denorval_1899_1977/#.VMkm3WjF98F, accessed January 2015.

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Unthank co-founded the Portland Urban League in 1945 (and housed the League office in his examination room), as well as serving as president of the Portland chapter of the NAACP.¹¹⁶ He was also a member of the State Committee for Equal Rights and the Council of Social Agencies. In 1943, he became the first African American to become member of the Portland City Club. In this position he encouraged the club to publish the 1945 study, "The Negro in Portland," which "opened the eyes of many citizens to ongoing discriminatory practices."¹¹⁷ At Unthank's death, Urban League director Sheldon Hill said, 'Contributions he has made to the community over 50 years have a lot to do with the direction race relations have taken in this town.' In 1958, Unthank was named Doctor of the Year by the Oregon State Medical Society in recognition of his civic leadership. In 1962, he was named Citizen of the Year by the Portland chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews for his work with the local Romani community. And in 1971, he received the Distinguished Citizenship Award from the University of Oregon and the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission.

Another prominent member of the African American community who was active in the fight for civil rights in this era was Edwin C. (Bill) Berry. Berry, who had studied education, began his career with the Pittsburgh Urban League. In May of 1945, he moved to Portland to found the Portland Urban League and began to lobby the Oregon legislature to adopt a Fair Employment Practices law. After its passage in 1949, Oregon became one of a handful of states to ban employment discrimination. He then joined the group, which included the Rutherfords, that was working towards adoption of a statewide Public Accommodations law, which finally occurred in 1953. His success attracted the attention of the Chicago Urban League and in 1956, Berry moved to that community, serving as executive director until his retirement from the organization in 1970.¹¹⁸

Kathryn Bogle, another influential African American in this era, was a journalist. Like Verdell Rutherford, she came from Oklahoma and with her family moved to Marshfield, Oregon. She was educated at the University of Oregon and had early successes in journalism in the 1930s that allowed her to speak out against discrimination. She is best known for her 1937 *Oregonian* article, "An American Negro Speaks of Color," the first article the newspaper purchased from an African American. The article described what it was like being black in Portland at that time.¹¹⁹ She was later unable to find fulltime work in journalism, but continued to write for black newspapers. She was hired in 1941 to work for the U.S. Employment Service in Portland, the first black woman in the state to hold a state government position. She is best remembered, however, for her role as a social worker after the Vanport Flood, when she worked with other social service organizations and the good Samaritan Hospital to provide assistance to African Americans. As a member of the Oregon League of Women Voters, she was also among the group of people that worked toward passage of the state's first civil rights act in 1953. In 1993, she was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Portland Association of Black Journalists.¹²⁰

The Rutherfords and the NAACP

The Rutherfords began their life of activism and support for equal opportunity for blacks in Portland soon after their marriage in 1936. In the 1930s through the 1950s they were part of a tight-knit group of African Americans that sought to influence public policy through organizations to which they belonged, organizations they founded, and individual activism. Social institutions played an important role, as the community members joined together to seek change. The Rutherford's contributions to the civil rights movement were all the more remarkable for the fact that they also held full-time jobs throughout their careers, raised a family, were active in their church and social organizations, held office in several organizations, including the NAACP, and were founders of the NAACP Credit Union, in addition to spending 17 years lobbying for civil rights in Oregon before passage of the Public Accommodations Act of 1953.¹²¹ In the words of Otto and Verdell's daughter Charlotte,

¹¹⁶ One of the Urban League's primary goals was to change employment practices and attitudes toward blacks in the workplace.

¹¹⁷ Pearson, "UnThank, Dr. DeNoval (1899-1977)," n.p.

¹¹⁸ Holly Roose, "Berry, Edwin C., "Bill" (1910-1987), *The Black Past, Remembered & Reclaimed*, www.BlackPast.org, accessed February 2015.

¹¹⁹ Oregon Black Pioneers, *African Americans of Portland*, 49.

¹²⁰ Amy Brown, "Bogle, Kathryn (1906-2003)," *The Black Past, Remembered & Reclaimed*, www.BlackPast.org, accessed February 2015.

¹²¹ The Public Accommodations Act of 1953 outlawed discrimination in hotels, motels, restaurants and amusement places on the basis

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"Our house was the office for the NAACP, there was no building, there was no rented space. So the dining room, pretty much, was the office. And not only for the NAACP but in the mid-50s, the NAACP Federal Credit Union also started in our dining room. My Dad made the speeches, but my Mom was doing the work. Her mimeograph machine and typewriter were the foundation for the organization."¹²²

The Rutherfords did not have as high a profile as other civil rights activists of the era, although Verdell was secretary of the Portland chapter of the NAACP from the late 1940s to 1962, and Otto was president for three consecutive terms in 1952, 1953 and 1954, including the key term in 1953 in which a civil rights bill was finally passed.¹²³ They were, however, the stalwarts of the organization and the civil rights movement in general in Portland. Their continual engagement on many different levels and in many organizations (Otto, for example, was also on the board of the Urban League and Verdell was president of the Oregon Association of Colored Women's Culture Club), fostered the types of relationships that were needed in this era of organizing to support of key legislation. Otto Rutherford was generally the public face of the couple, while Verdell's remarkable organizational abilities kept communication flowing. In Verdell's words, "We sent out thousands of letters throughout the state to organizations, churches and the Legislature. We had a mimeograph machine in the basement that you had to crank by hand. It was a lot of work."¹²⁴

The fight for civil rights in Oregon began in 1919, when the first civil rights bill was introduced in the legislature. It was a long, uphill battle. Black leaders in Oregon lobbied for civil rights bills in 18 legislative sessions before their success in 1953. The Negro Exclusion Law, which prohibited blacks from living in the state, was repealed on November 2, 1926 and on June 28, 1927, blacks and Chinese were given the right to vote. The Legislature had passed a fair employment practices act in 1947 and in 1951 lawmakers repealed the ban on interracial marriage and prohibited discrimination in vocational schools.¹²⁵ The Portland City Council passed a comprehensive civil rights ordinance in 1950, but it was repealed by referendum that same year. It would not be until 1953 that the key Public Accommodations Act was passed.

Otto Rutherford noted that one reason the African American community in Portland was not more successful in attaining civil rights before the post-war era was due to its small size. In 1920, African Americans made up only .6% of the total population in Portland. It was not much more as late as 1940. In the 1920s and 1930s, the NAACP held a list of Ku Klux Klan merchants and Otto and his fellow African Americans boycotted stores belonging to Klan members.¹²⁶ They tried to put economic pressure on businesses that would result in positive legislation, but it was too small to make a difference in this way.¹²⁷ The African American community also, however, had white supporters.

Mark Hatfield, as a young (30-year-old) state representative, co-sponsored the Public Accommodation bill, which proposed outlawing discrimination in hotels, motels, restaurants and amusement places on the basis of race, religion or national origin. While it faced opposition from the lodging and restaurant industries, the bill passed 46-11 on April 13th, 1953.¹²⁸ The bill stated, in part, that, "All persons within the jurisdiction of this state shall be entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of any place of public accommodation, resort or amusement, without any distinction, discrimination or restriction on account of race, religion, color or national origin."¹²⁹ Mark Hatfield has been quoted as saying that the 1953 bill was

of race, religion or national origin.

¹²² Nadine Jelsing, "Portland Civil Rights: Lift Ev'ry Voice," (film). Portland, OR: Oregon Public Broadcasting, April 21, 2015.

¹²³ Gregg R. S. Blesch, "Civil Rights Leader Rutherford Dies," *Oregonian*, (obit.), March 2, 2001, D01. Barrie, Oral history interview, n.p. Verdell also served as the assistant secretary of the Northwest area council of branches of the NAACP beginning in 1951.

"Vancouverite NAACP Head," *Oregonian*, April 30, 1951, 17.

¹²⁴ George Rede, "The Fight for Civil Rights in Oregon," *Oregonian*, April 18, 1993, C01.

¹²⁵ Rede, "The Fight for Civil Rights," C01.

¹²⁶ Barrie, Oral history interview, n.p.

¹²⁷ Barrie, Oral history interview, n.p.

¹²⁸ Rede, "The Fight for Civil Rights," C01. At the time, Hatfield was chairman of the House Committee on State and Federal Affairs. Hatfield and State Senator Richard Neuberger had earlier co-sponsored the Fair Employment Practices Act, which was successfully passed in 1949. Millner, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 7.

¹²⁹ Milner, "The Civil Rights Movement and Oregon History," 2. A law requiring segregation in theaters had been put in place as early as 1905. Millner, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 7.

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“the highlight of my legislative career.”¹³⁰

While president of the NAACP, Otto regularly spoke to the press on issues of race, from redlining to discrimination to the appropriateness of political appointees due to their stance on civil rights.¹³¹ Specific activities noted in the press at this time are as follows. Rutherford spoke on a panel sponsored by the Portland Urban League in August 1950, convened in order to kick off the election campaign for the Portland civil rights ordinance, on the topic, “My Stake in Civil Rights.”¹³² The panel discussion included an appeal to patriotism: “Should Portland’s civil rights ordinance fail in November – and it must not fail – Stalin’s propaganda machine will have the facts within an hour, blasting away once again at her satellites that America does not practice what she preaches . . . We cannot break faith with our men in Korea.”¹³³ The civil rights ordinance, which was intended to outlaw racial discrimination in public places, was later defeated by referendum.

Rutherford was among those who testified before the State Legislature in January 1953, shortly before the passage of the civil rights act, to empower an anti-discrimination commission (formerly the fair employment practices advisory commission), by allowing them to hire an executive director and appropriate funding.¹³⁴ In April 1954, after passage of the act, Rutherford, in his role as president of the NAACP, continued to advocate for the reconfiguration of the state commission against discrimination to administer and enforce the Oregon civil rights statute. The reason it was important to establish this commission, he explained, was that in the event that a person was discriminated against, the onus was currently on the defendant to provide for his defense: “. . . under the present provisions of the law a person discriminated against must hire an attorney in order to bring a civil suit against proprietors of public places of accommodation who refuse service on the basis of race, creed or color. He said that under the commission setup, an aggrieved person could file with the commission and it would investigate the charges and take appropriate action.”¹³⁵ The importance of this commission was soon demonstrated.

Nineteen-fifty-four marked the first legal action under Oregon’s new civil rights law. That year, with Rutherford at the helm, the Portland NAACP threatened to bring a legal suit against Frank Leach, operator at the Athena Hotel, on the basis of a discriminatory action. Godfrey Ibom, a Nigerian exchange student at the University of Oregon, was refused service at the hotel.¹³⁶ Ibom appealed to the NAACP, who hired an attorney to represent him.¹³⁷ In a letter to Leach, the attorney retained on behalf of Ibom stated that Ibom was denied service at the hotel restaurant “solely on account of his race or color in violation of the Oregon civil rights act,” and that a settlement must be made within ten days. The first test of the new Commission was successful and Ibom was awarded a \$200 settlement, which he donated to the University of Oregon’s Foreign Students’ Service Fund and the NAACP Legal Redress Fund.¹³⁸

Another event that was a high point during Otto Rutherford’s tenure as president of the Portland NAACP was when the organization brought Thurgood Marshall, the national NAACP’s chief legal counsel, to Portland. He was invited to be the principal speaker at a “Fight for Freedom” rally sponsored by the Portland Branch of the NAACP. This occurred the same year that Marshall won the *Brown v. Board of Education* trial, a landmark case in which the Court found state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students to be unconstitutional and a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.¹³⁹ Marshall was the chief counsel for the plaintiffs.

¹³⁰ Rede, “The Fight for Civil Rights,” C01.

¹³¹ *Oregonian*, October 31, 1953.

¹³² “Civil Rights Topic,” *Oregonian*, August 25, 1950, 6.

¹³³ “Civil Rights Meeting Told Portland on Trial at Polls,” *Oregonian*, August 26, 1950, 12.

¹³⁴ “Groups Push Racial Issues,” *Oregonian*, January 20, 1953, 5.

¹³⁵ “State Civil Rights Commission Urged by NAACP,” *Oregonian*, April 26, 1954, 11.

¹³⁶ “Civil Rights Suit Hinted,” *Oregonian*, August 10, 1954, 1.

¹³⁷ “Civil Rights Suit Hinted,” *Oregonian*, August 10, 1954, 1.

¹³⁸ This was published, along with a photograph of Otto, the student Ibom, and Miss Grace Choi of the University of Oregon’s Foreign Students’ Service Fund, in *Jet*, a national black magazine and *The Crisis*, the national magazine of the NAACP.

¹³⁹ Marshall was later appointed to the U.S. Supreme court, serving as its first African American. Oregon Black Pioneers, *African Americans of Portland*, 85. According to a NAACP web page dedicated to the NAACP’s legal history, “The Brown decision inspired the marches and demonstrations of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and ’60s. These wide-spread protests ultimately led to the

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On the occasion of elections for the next president of the NAACP in November 1954, Franklin H. Williams, the west coast Secretary-Counsel of the NAACP, “. . . lauded leadership of the Portland branch and singled out Otto Rutherford, president, as one of the nation’s finest branch presidents.”¹⁴⁰

Following the success of the Public Accommodation Law, the states first Fair Housing Act was adopted in 1957, disallowing refusal to rent or sell to a person because of race, religion, color or national origin.¹⁴¹ In 1961, the state legislature passed a bill that modified the state statute that limited the right to bear arms to white males only.¹⁴² The de facto segregation of Portland’s public schools (de facto because most of Portland’s black population was concentrated in inner northeast Portland) was reversed with ‘The Blanchard Plan’ of the 1970s. Like most places, de-segregation of Portland’s public schools had mixed results. Portland’s desegregation plan was particularly harmful, reversing the positive changes seen above, in that it effectively proposed closing black schools. When Jefferson High School, the city’s black high school, was targeted for closure in 1977, Superintendent Robert Blanchard (after eleven years on the job) was fired and a new black superintendent hired. A much more balanced de-segregation plan, the Comprehensive Desegregation Plan, was put into place in 1980.¹⁴³

THE RUTHERFORDS’ LATER CONTRIBUTIONS

After passage of the Public Accommodations Act, the Rutherfords continued to be engaged in improving conditions for Portland’s African American community. Otto continued to serve as president of the NAACP for another year, thereafter sitting on the board and being involved in various committees. He was particularly active in lobbying for work opportunities for area youth. He was also active In the Urban League of Portland, having been elected to the board in 1952. In 1966, he was appointed Director of Housing for the Office of Economic Opportunity, a job made possible by the Johnson administration’s Model Cities Program.¹⁴⁴ In the 1970s he became Director of Housing for the Urban League’s Senior Adult Service Center.¹⁴⁵ He later served as head of the King Neighborhood Association.

The Neighborhood Service Center

Rutherford served as the Neighborhood Service Center’s Director of Housing under an EOE program financed by “War on Poverty” funds.¹⁴⁶ Its service area extended from N-NE Ainsworth Street to Broadway, and from NE 15th Avenue to Interstate-5. Organizations that were housed in the new building on Stanton Street included the Urban League, Family Counseling, Legal Aid, Planned Parenthood, Boy Scouts and others.¹⁴⁷ In his position Rutherford promoted the provision of low income housing in Albina, to replace deteriorated building stock.¹⁴⁸

One incident that occurred while Rutherford was in this position – and one in which he played a role – was the prevention of a more severe situation at a planned Black Power rally at Irving Park in Albina in late July, 1967. The anticipated situation was serious enough that Governor Tom McCall kept 500 National Guardsmen and state police on alert in case the situation turned more volatile.

enactment of the [national] Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. “NAACP Legal History,” *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*, <http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-legal-history>, accessed January 2015.

¹⁴⁰ William Hilliard, “Mission Completed Goal Of National NAACP by ‘63,” *Oregonian*, November 15, 1954, 10.

¹⁴¹ Millner *The Civil Rights Movement*, 8.

¹⁴² Millner, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 9.

¹⁴³ Millner, *The Civil Rights Movement*, 10.

¹⁴⁴ The federal Model Cities program, created in 1966, was intended to focus resources on a few selected neighborhoods that would become ‘models’ for revitalization, and required community participation in setting goals and priorities. Planning agencies in Portland had a history of ignoring the needs of Albina residents . The Comprehensive City Demonstration Plan, released in 1968 identified, for the first time, the racial problems perceived by Northeast Portland residents. Carl Abbott, *Portland, Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City*. Nebraska, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.

¹⁴⁵ Oz Hopkins, “Black family here reflects,” *Oregon Journal*, February 2, 1977. Erin Hoover Barnett, “Civil rights champion Otto Rutherford dies,” (obituary), *Oregonian*, August 18, 2000. The Senior Adult Service Center was later taken over by the Urban League.

¹⁴⁶ The building was located at 59 NE Stanton Street.

¹⁴⁷ “Center To Open Door To New Opportunities,” *Oregonian*, April 15, 1966, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Early Deane, “Low-Rental Housing Demanded At Albina,” *Oregonian*, January 27, 1966, 35.

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Before the rally, a consortium of black church leaders and anti-poverty workers, including Rutherford, went to “dozens of taverns, pool halls and barber shops” to try to find out more about the proposed rally, including whether “outside agitators” could be expected, and to convince the area youth to not participate in the event. As the result of an anonymous call to the Neighborhood Service Center, workers went immediately to the park. Rutherford and others had established a counseling and communication network, an action that was, after the fact, credited with avoiding a more severe impact as a result of the rally: “The communications network established by Negro leaders included adults whose jobs were to convey information to a “command post” established at the Neighborhood Service Center, hub of Albina’s anti-poverty program.”¹⁴⁹

Following the unsuccessful rally, adults and youth attacked businesses on Union Avenue, throwing rocks and fire bombs and shattering windows. Forty-seven adults were arrested and about 35 were arrested, primarily for vandalism. Called the “Albina Riot,” these events went on for two days.¹⁵⁰ The Executive Director of Portland’s Urban League, Shelton Hill, was quoted regarding the event: “The only good that could possibly come out of a thing like this is that it may shake Portland out of its complacency. It shows that these things can happen anywhere.”¹⁵¹ Rutherford was quoted as saying that, “Fundamentally our kids are pretty decent kids,” but agreed with Hill that the basic problem was lack of training and jobs for area youth. Both attributed the lack of more damage to the preliminary work to fend off violence.

Rutherford continued in his work to promote the development of housing opportunities for Portland’s African Americans. In February 1969, he was among those who testified before Oregon’s House Urban Affairs committee, a sub-committee of the State Legislature, on the subject of living conditions for “city dwellers.” Rutherford told the committee that many of Portland’s black residents of adequate income faced limited housing choices because of discrimination and “discriminatory interest rates – if loans are available at all.” He noted that renters had even fewer options, with extremely poor conditions and facing raised rents or eviction if they complained.¹⁵²

Rutherford also continued his work within the neighborhood. In 1978, as chair of the King Neighborhood Association, he facilitated the discussion of a planned four-block Nordstrom distribution warehouse and discount retail store proposed three blocks from his house. The project, which would have displaced about 100 residents, was sponsored by the Portland Development Authority, which would have cleared the site and sold it to Nordstrom. The area, bounded by NE Union Avenue on the north, NE 6th Avenue on the south, NE Shaver Street on the west, and NE Skidmore Street on the east, was referred to as a blighted area. The proposal sparked memories of the nearby Emanuel Hospital urban renewal project, in which homes were torn down and the area never redeveloped.¹⁵³ The project did not go forward based on community opposition.¹⁵⁴

The Community Survey

One of the Rutherfords’ last important contributions to Portland’s African American community was to participate as “Community Historians” in the African American survey and historic context developed for the city of Portland in the mid-to-late 1990s. This project, which was actually finalized after the Rutherfords had moved into a senior care facility, was the first comprehensive look at African American history in Portland from a historic preservation perspective. Among those who participated in the study and survey were a project team of nine, including prominent historians in Oregon, led by Cathy Galbraith, executive director of the Boscoe-Milligan Foundation (and primary author of this nomination), and over 70 additional volunteers.¹⁵⁵ Accomplishments included the preparation of a historic context statement; a historic survey of 1,284 properties

¹⁴⁹ Robert Olmos, “Negro Leaders Declare Albina Refuses To Accept Black Power Theory,” *Oregonian*, August 1, 1967, 16.

¹⁵⁰ “47 Adults Face Charges Stemming From Disorder,” *Oregonian*, August 1, 1967, 16.

¹⁵¹ Charlie Hanna, “Need For More Jobs For Negro Youths Cited By Officials Of Urban League,” *Oregonian*, August 1, 1967, 16.

¹⁵² William Sanderson, “House Urban Affairs Committee Invades City In Search Of Ideas,” *Oregonian*, February 26, 1969, 15.

¹⁵³ Michael Alesko, “Northeast neighborhood divided over renewal plan,” *Sunday Oregonian*, February 5, 1978, 1.

¹⁵⁴ Richard Colby, “Neighborhood divided over warehouse loss,” *Sunday Oregonian*, March 26, 1978, A17.

¹⁵⁵ Professional historians on the project team included Dr. Carl Abbott, of the Urban Studies program at Portland State University (PSU); Prof. McKinley Burt, of the Urban and Black Studies program at PSU; and Dr. Darrell Millner, of the Black Studies program at PSU. Otto and Verdell Rutherford were the Community Historians and Kimberly Moreland, author of *African Americans of Portland*, was the interview coordinator. Additional team members conducted research and handled data entry and production.

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associated with African Americans in Portland, along with their major accomplishments; the recording of 38 oral histories; and implementation of a public outreach program associated with the project.

The Collection

Verdell Rutherford assembled immense photo albums for each of her children and grandchildren that included family photographs, family trees, and other documents. Her activities extended far beyond the family, however. The Rutherfords became known for their collection of newspaper articles, documents, and memorabilia that chronicled the African American experience in Portland, particularly in the twentieth century. They were interviewed numerous times about the collection and loaned out portions of it for exhibits in a number of different venues, particularly during Black History month. Today the collection – including many family items – is in Portland State University’s Special Collections and University Archives, and is considered an exceptionally complete and comprehensive documentation of the history of three generations of a family and their experience as black Africans living in Portland across an entire century.¹⁵⁶

POSTSCRIPT

Three important events have taken place that commemorate the lives and influence of Otto and Verdell Rutherford since the initial drafting of this nomination of the Rutherford House in 1999. The first was the development and broadcasting of “Local Color,” a 1999 documentary on the civil rights movement in Portland by Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB). In this film, Otto Rutherford narrates the history of African Americans in Portland in the mid-twentieth century and the history of the Civil Rights movement in Portland, and visits the places that are important to this history. The second was the opening of a traditional exhibit, a virtual exhibit, the launching of a webpage, and a symposium on the occasion of Portland State University’s Special Collections and University Archives launch of the “Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection, 1880s-1980s” in 2012. And the third was the development and broadcasting of the film, “Portland Civil Rights: Lift Ev’ry Voice,” by OPB in 2015. In this film, Otto and Verdell’s daughter Charlotte speaks about her parent’s place in the Civil Rights movement in Portland and the importance of the Rutherford Family Collection.

The Rutherford and Burdine family papers and memorabilia and the extensive collection of documents and artifacts chronicling the history of African Americans in Portland that Verdell Rutherford collected over her lifetime is now housed at Portland State University (PSU) in their Special Collections and University Archives. A digital exhibit, curated by Prof. Patricia A. Schechter and her history students at PSU, was created from the collection.¹⁵⁷ The library’s Special Collections department also sponsored a traditional exhibit entitled, “Say We Are Here”: Culture, Community and Activism Across Four Generations of Black Oregonians,” held from September 26, 2012 to January 31, 2013. When the exhibit opened, several talks were given that included such speakers as Verdell and Otto’s daughter Charlotte, who donated the collection; several prominent local academics in African American history; and the students who worked on the exhibits, among others.

John Henley, the appraiser who appraised this collection also spoke at the symposium. He noted that in his 30 years of professional experience, which included appraising the papers of such Oregon luminaries as Mark O. Hatfield and Ken Kesey, he found this collection, “the most historically significant collection he has ever appraised,” because it encompasses an entire family and an entire community. He stated that the collection’s exceptional importance is due to the fact that it relates a family to a community, to a city, and to a national context more comprehensively than any other archive he had ever handled.¹⁵⁸

One of the history students who curated the exhibit discussed her experience. In preparation for the passage of the Oregon Public Accommodations Act, “they [the Rutherfords] were running those [NAACP] meetings and making the fliers out of their living room, off of their dining room table.” She explained that the collection

¹⁵⁶ John Henley, speaking at the opening of the “Rutherford Family Collection at Portland State University (video), November 8, 2012.

¹⁵⁷ “Say We Are Here: Selections from the Verdell A. Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection,” *Portland State University Library Digital Exhibits*, <http://exhibits.library.pdx.edu/exhibits/show/say-we-are-here--selections-fr>, accessed January 2015.

¹⁵⁸ John Henley, “Say We Are Here: The Collection of Verdell Burdine and Otto Rutherford,” (video)http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/swah_exhibit/5/, accessed May 2015.

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demonstrated all the work that went into passage of the law and demonstrated 'an average people's agency; it was a different way of looking at history.'

In 2015, following on the release of the 1999 documentary "Local Color," OPB produced a second documentary film entitled, "Portland Civil Rights: Lift Ev'ry Voice," that chronicled the Portland Civil Rights movement in the 1960s through the early 1980s. This film featured Charlotte Rutherford, among others, speaking about her family's legacy and her own activism in this time frame, as the next generation of the Rutherford family carrying on their legacy: "In Portland and across the country, a new generation of young black activists was emerging with more militant strategies for changing the status quo. They began demanding equal rights as first class citizens, more jobs and better housing, and an end to police harassment and brutality." The addition of Charlotte Rutherford's narration about the black experience in Portland in the 1960s and 1970s completes the contribution of the third generation of Rutherfords to Portland's African American history.

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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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University - Portland State University
- Other
- Name of repository(ies): Bosco-Milligan Foundation

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>45.552239</u>	<u>-122.656852</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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

NW ½ SW ¼ Section 23, Township 1 North, Range 1 East of the Willamette Meridian, in Multnomah County, Oregon, legally described as the eastern on-half of Lots 9 and 10, Block 19, Lincoln Park Annex.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The 50 x 100 foot Portland City tax lot occupied by the Rutherford House (Tax Lot 15300), is the full extent of the property associated with the historic context.

Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Galbraith, Executive Director, with Diana Painter, SHPO staff date July 23, 2014
organization Bosco-Milligan Foundation telephone 503-231-7264
street & number 701 SE Grand Avenue email cathyg@visitahc.org
city or town Portland state Oregon zip code 97214

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Regional Location Map**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon

Photographer: 2000 – Cathy Galbraith; 2014 – David Greene

Date Photographed: November 2000; August 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

2000 Photos:

Photo 1 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0001
Main (south) façade and portion of west elevation

Photo 2 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0002
Main (south) façade entry

Photo 3 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0003
East elevation

Photo 4 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0004
North elevation, detail of boxed eaves

Photo 5 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0005
Main (south) elevation – entry porch and windows

Photo 6 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0006
Interior – living room windows, looking east

Photo 7 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0007
Living room fireplace, looking east

Photo 8 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0009
Dining room – entry to kitchen, wainscot, cabinet, looking north

Photo 9 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0010
Dining room, wainscot, door to upstairs, looking north

Photo 10 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0011
Second floor bedroom (typical)

Photo 11 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0012
Basement, 1929 door to garage

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Photo 12 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0013
Basement – garage wall, ceiling

2014 Photos:

Photo 13 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0014
South (front) and west elevations, 2014

Photo 14 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0015
East and north (rear) elevations, 2014

Photo 15 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0015
South (front) and east elevations, 2014

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 100 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

Rutherford, Otto and Verdell, House

Name of Property
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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 42

List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

LIST OF FIGURES

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- Figure 9:** The Portland Hotel
- Figure 10:** William H. and Lottie Rutherford
- Figure 11:** Edward W. and William H. Rutherford
- Figure 12:** William Jr., Alan, Otto and Donald Rutherford
- Figure 13:** The Burdine family
- Figure 14:** Verdell and Otto Rutherford as young adults
- Figure 15:** The Rutherford House in Albina, 1920
- Figure 16:** The Rutherford House in Albina, ca 1922
- Figure 17:** Mass meeting in Albina
- Figure 18:** Sign on Portland luncheonette
- Figure 19:** Location of African American residences and businesses in 1945
- Figure 20:** Migration of the African American community between 1930 and 1980
- Figure 21:** Handbill created to support various civil rights initiatives
- Figure 22:** Text of Senate Bill No. 169
- Figure 23:** Letter of thanks from the NAACP to the legislators
- Figure 24:** NAACP delegation and sponsors of civil rights bill
- Figure 25:** Otto Rutherford with Thurgood Marshall
- Figure 26:** Otto Rutherford and Godfrey Ibom
- Figure 27:** Otto and Verdell Rutherford, 1982
- Figure 28:** The Rutherfords and Mark Hatfield, 1998
- Figure 29:** Rutherford narrating the OPB film, "Local Color"
- Figure 30:** Otto and Verdell Rutherford in *The Oregonian's* "150 years," 2000
- Figure 31:** Poster for "Say We Are Here" exhibition, 2012
- Figure 32:** Charlotte Rutherford speaking at opening of "Say We Are Here," 2012

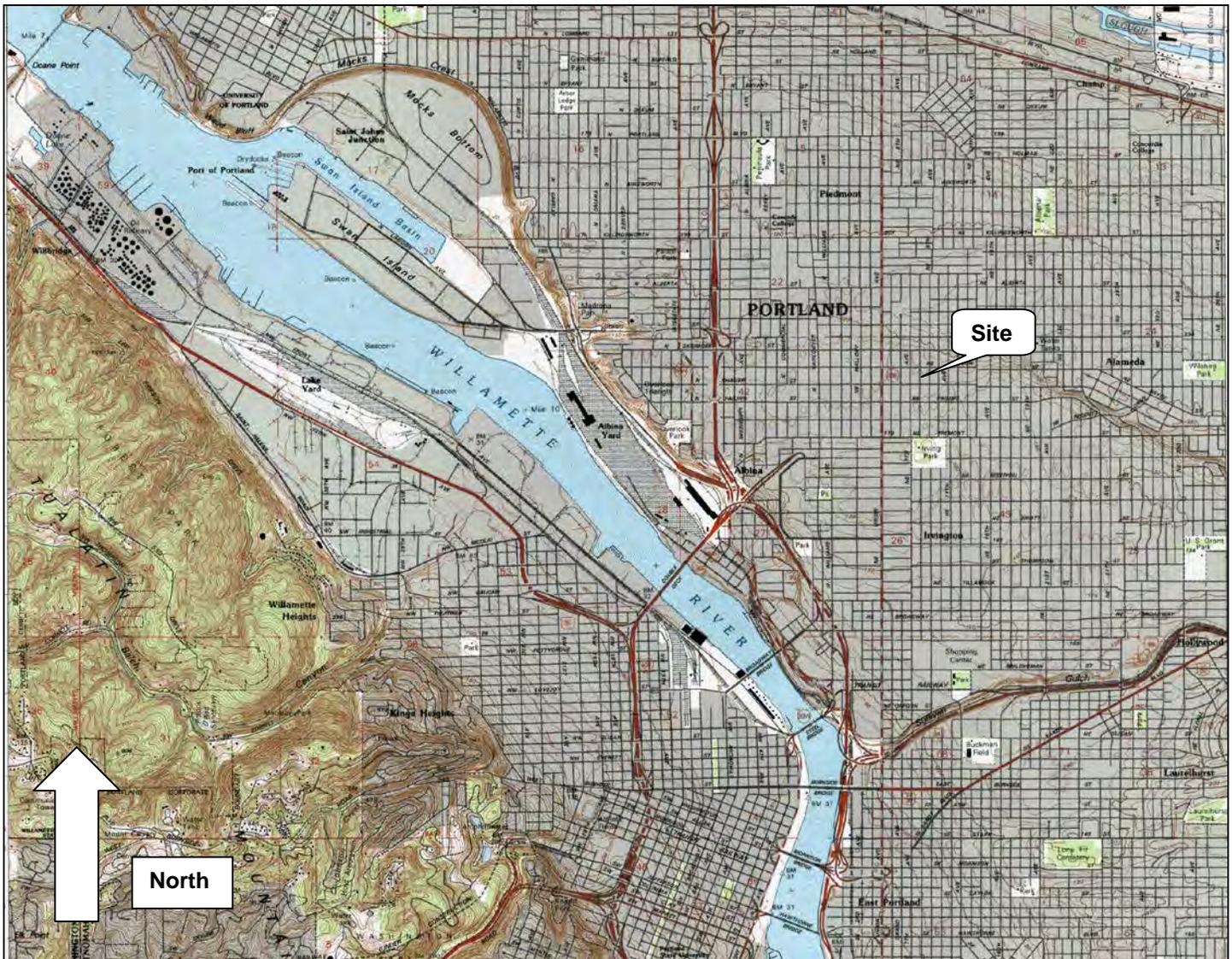
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Figure 1: Regional Vicinity Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852



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Figure 2: Local Location Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852



Source: Google Maps

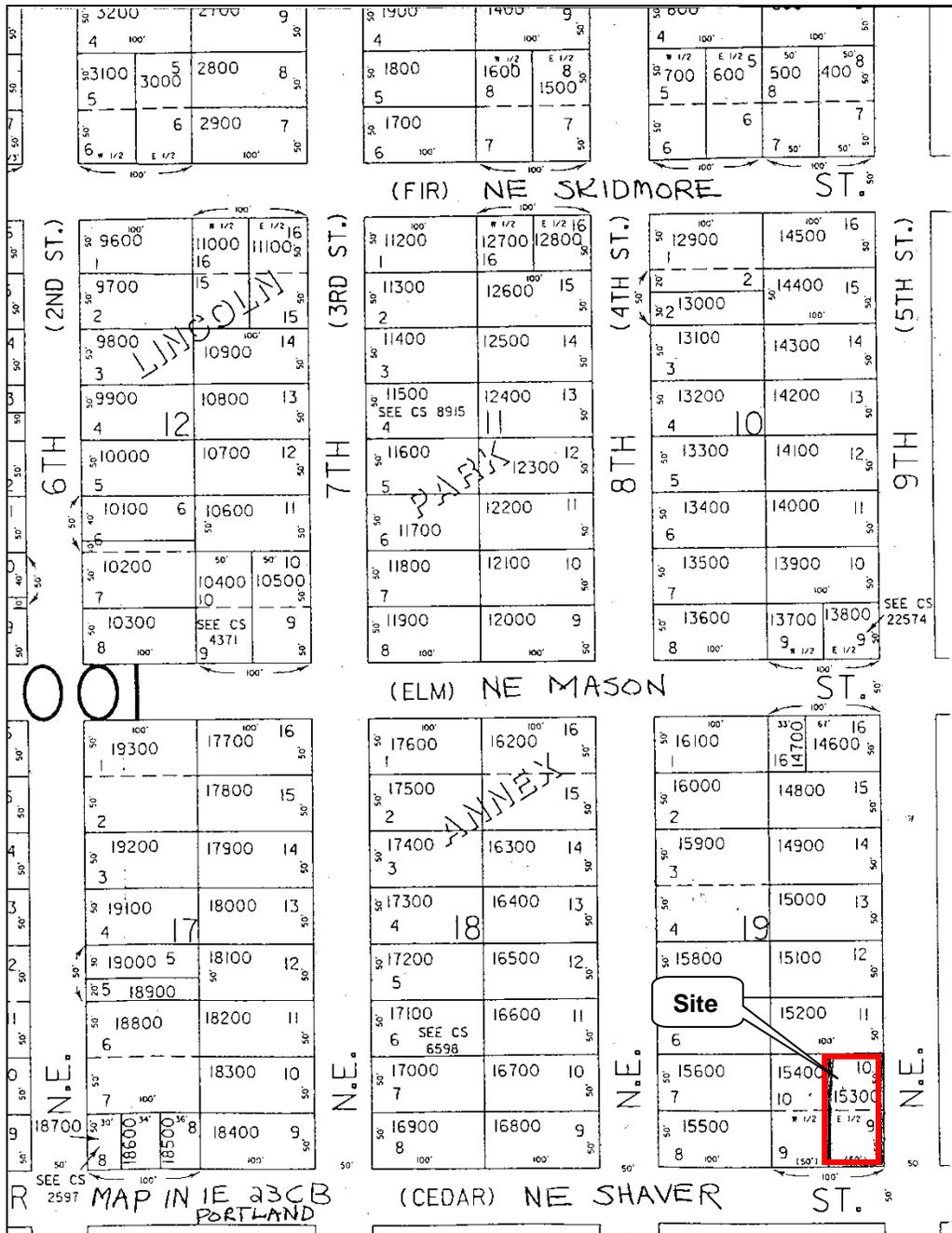
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Figure 3: Tax Lot Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852



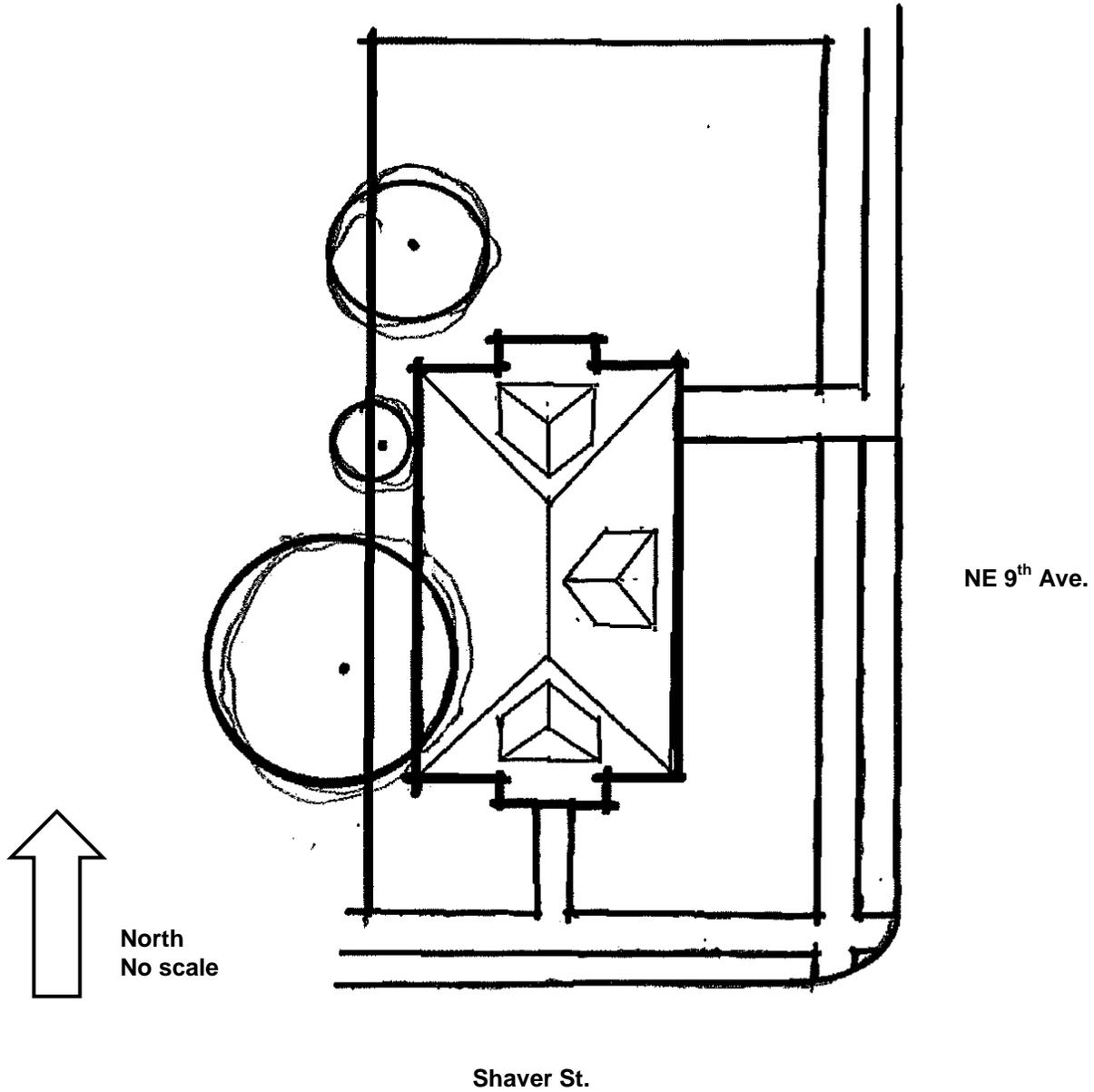
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Figure 4: Site Plan



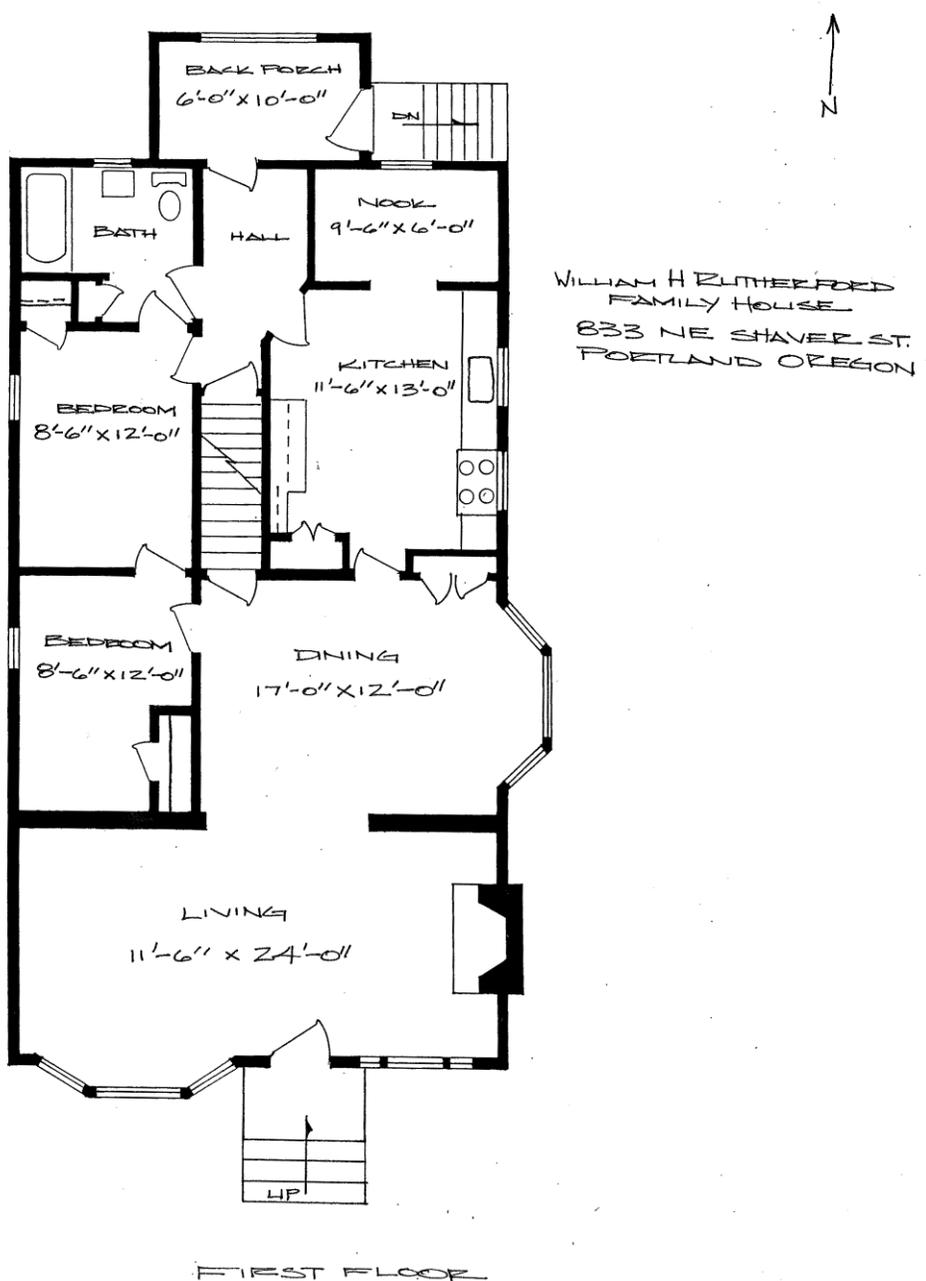
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Figure 5: First Floor Plan



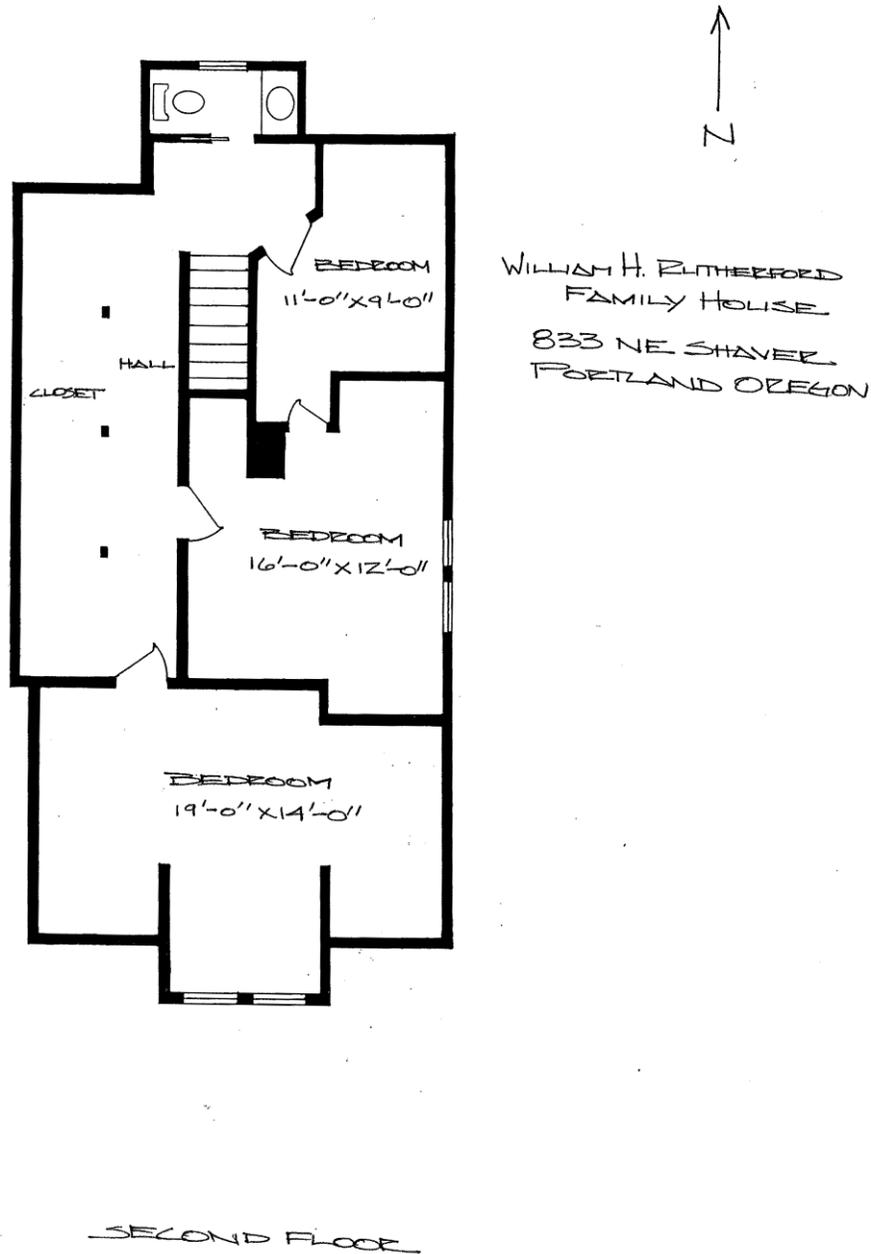
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Figure 6: Second Floor Plan



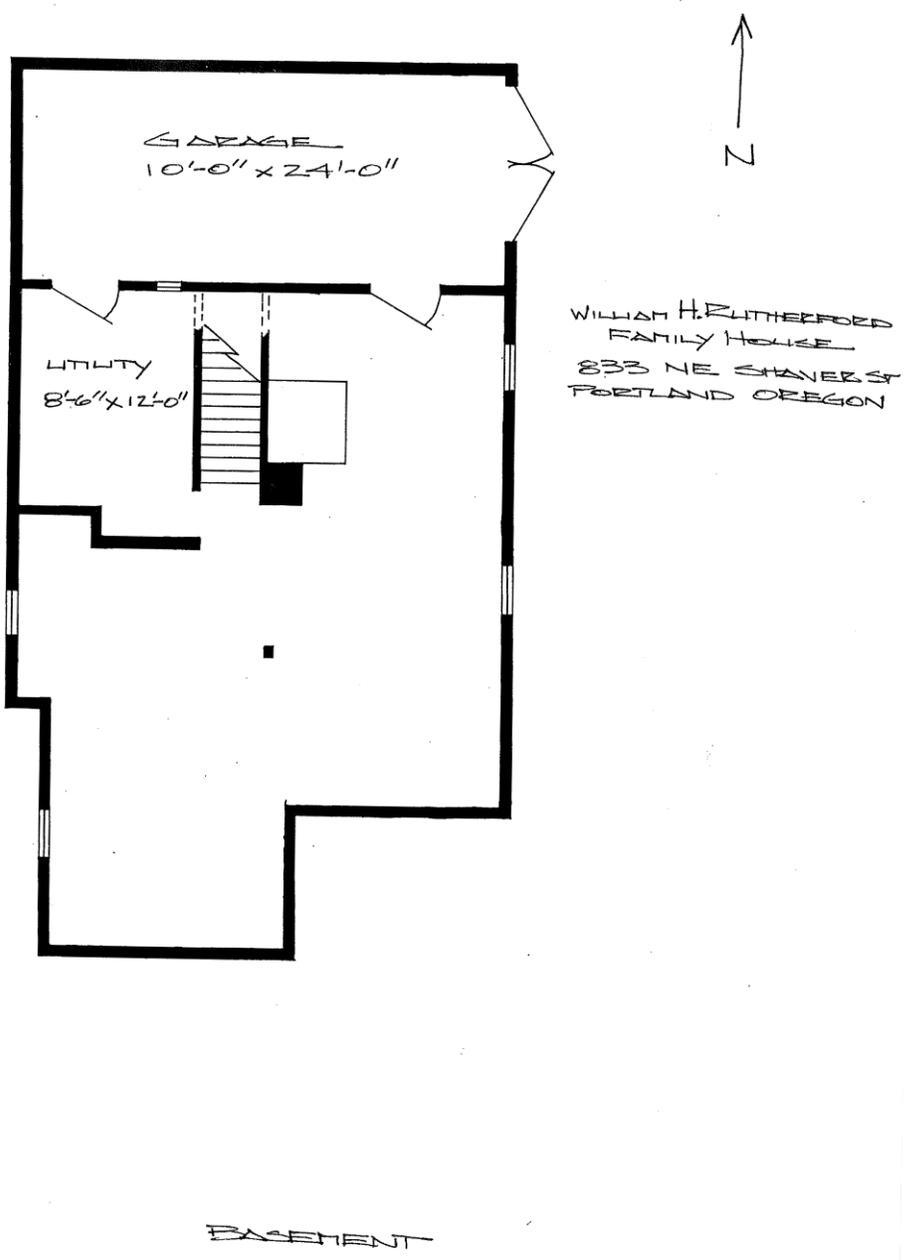
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Figure 7: Basement Plan



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Figure 8: Photo of waiters and barbers, which included William and Edward Rutherford, recruited by John Logan to work at the Portland Hotel in the 1890s



Source: *African Americans in Portland via OHS*

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Figure 9: The 326-room Portland Hotel, completed in 1890 by Henry Villard



Source: Special Collections, UO Libraries, via African Americans of Portland

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Figure 10: William H. and Lottie Rutherford, 1898



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

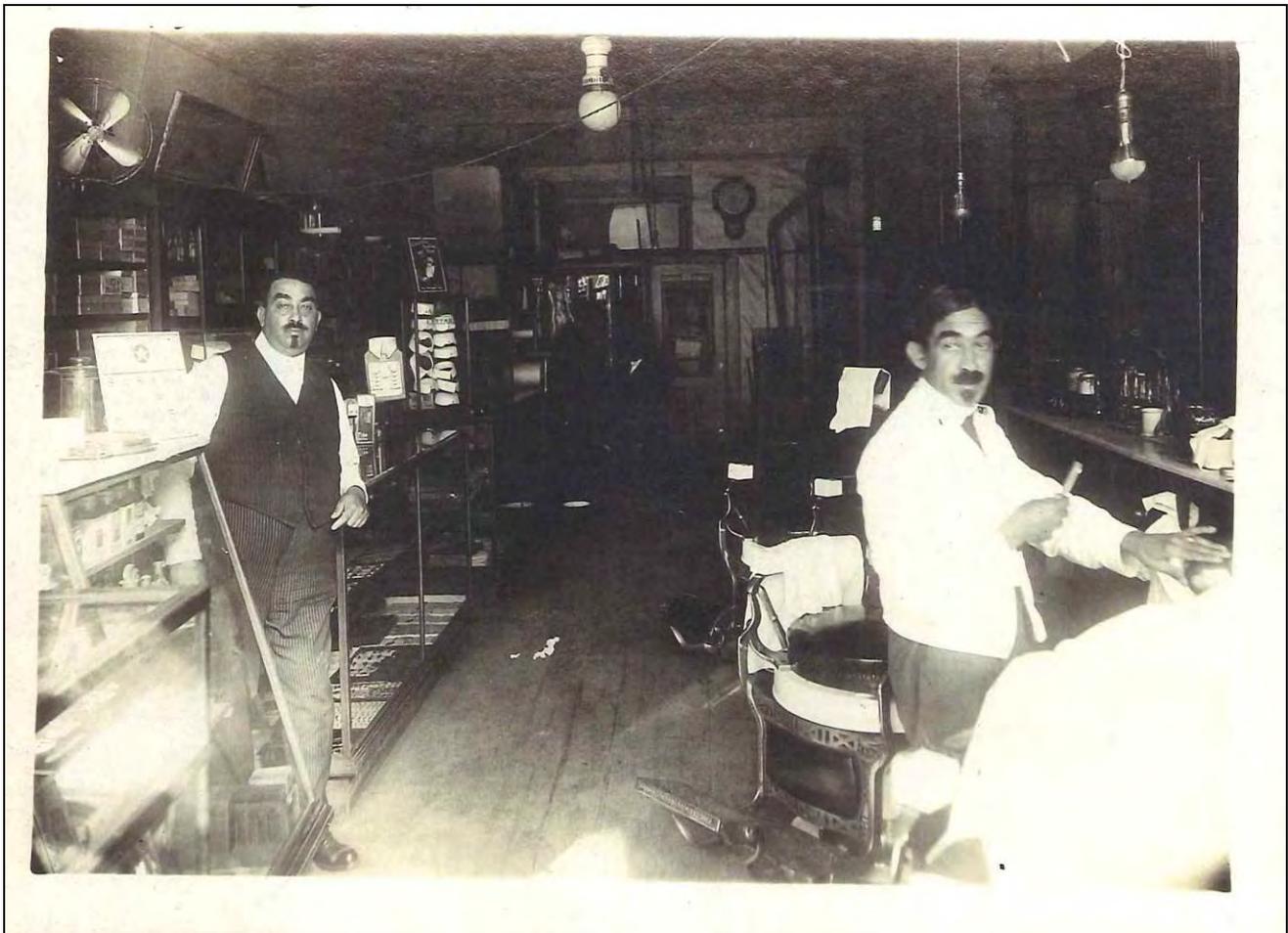
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Figure 11: Edward W. (left) and William H. Rutherford (right), Rutherford Brothers Barbers, 1912



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

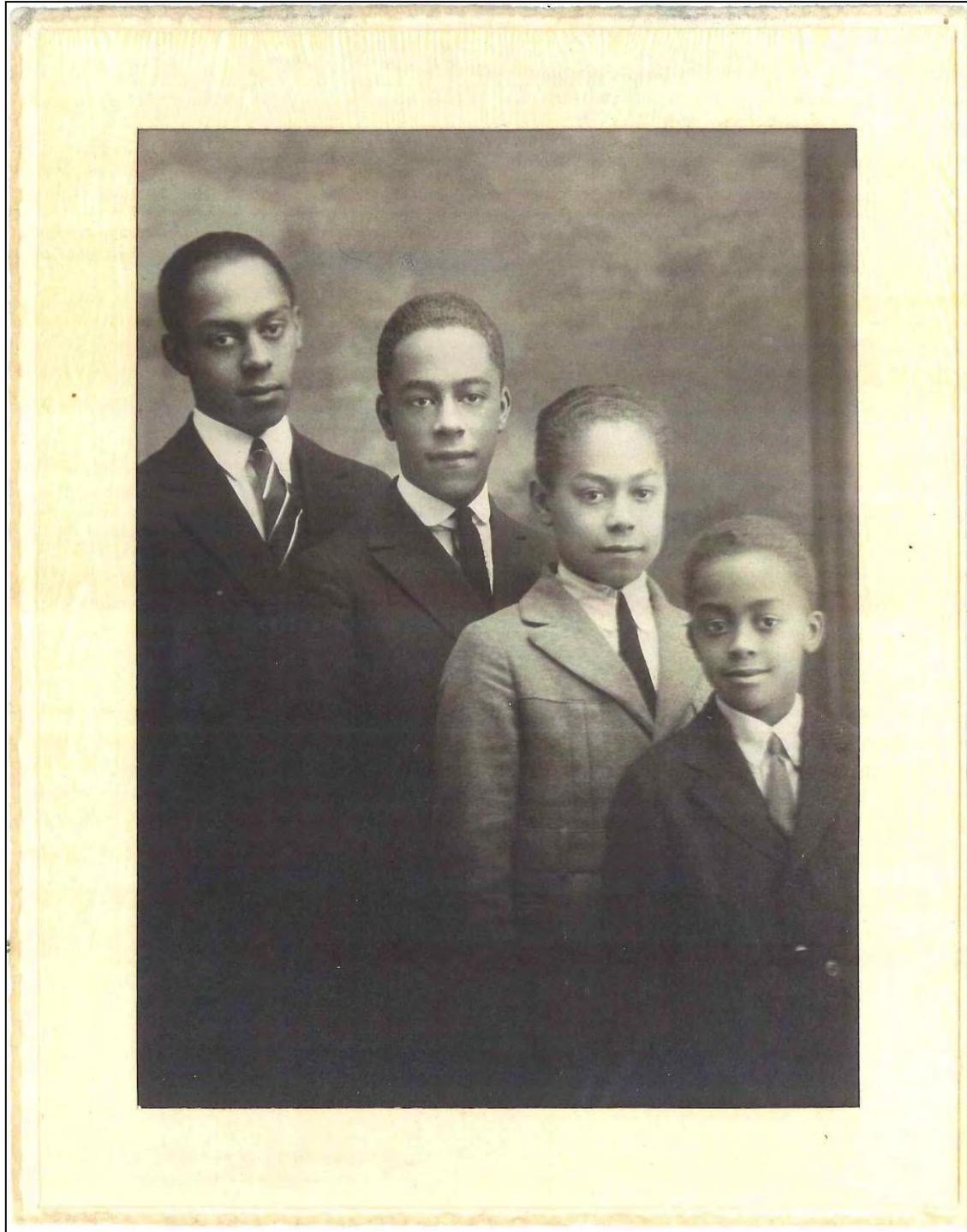
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Figure 12: William Jr., Alan, Otto and Donald Rutherford, ca 1919



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 13: Burdine family, 1919



FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN MARSHFIELD, OREGON IN 1919. L to R: DOLORES, HELEN (ON FATHER'S LAP), VERDELL, EARL (ON MOTHER'S LAP), & ALFRED. PRUDENCE (STANDING IN REAR) - SISTER OF EARL BURDINE. LEFT INSET - AUDREY, BORN IN 1920. RIGHT INSET - ERMA JEAN, BORN IN YAKIMA, WASHINGTON IN 1925. MAGGIE M. BOLES - BORN SEPTEMBER 1, 1885 IN CENTER POINT, ARKANSAS. EARL WAYNE BURDINE BORN JUNE 28, 1881 in ROCKSBURY, KANSAS..... MARRIED DECEMBER 29, 1907. MOVED TO MARSHFIELD, OREGON IN 1913.

Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 14: Verdell and Otto Rutherford as young adults, n.d.



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 15: The Rutherford House in Albina, 1920



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 16: The Rutherford House in Albina, ca 1922



Source: *Boscoe-Milligan Foundation*

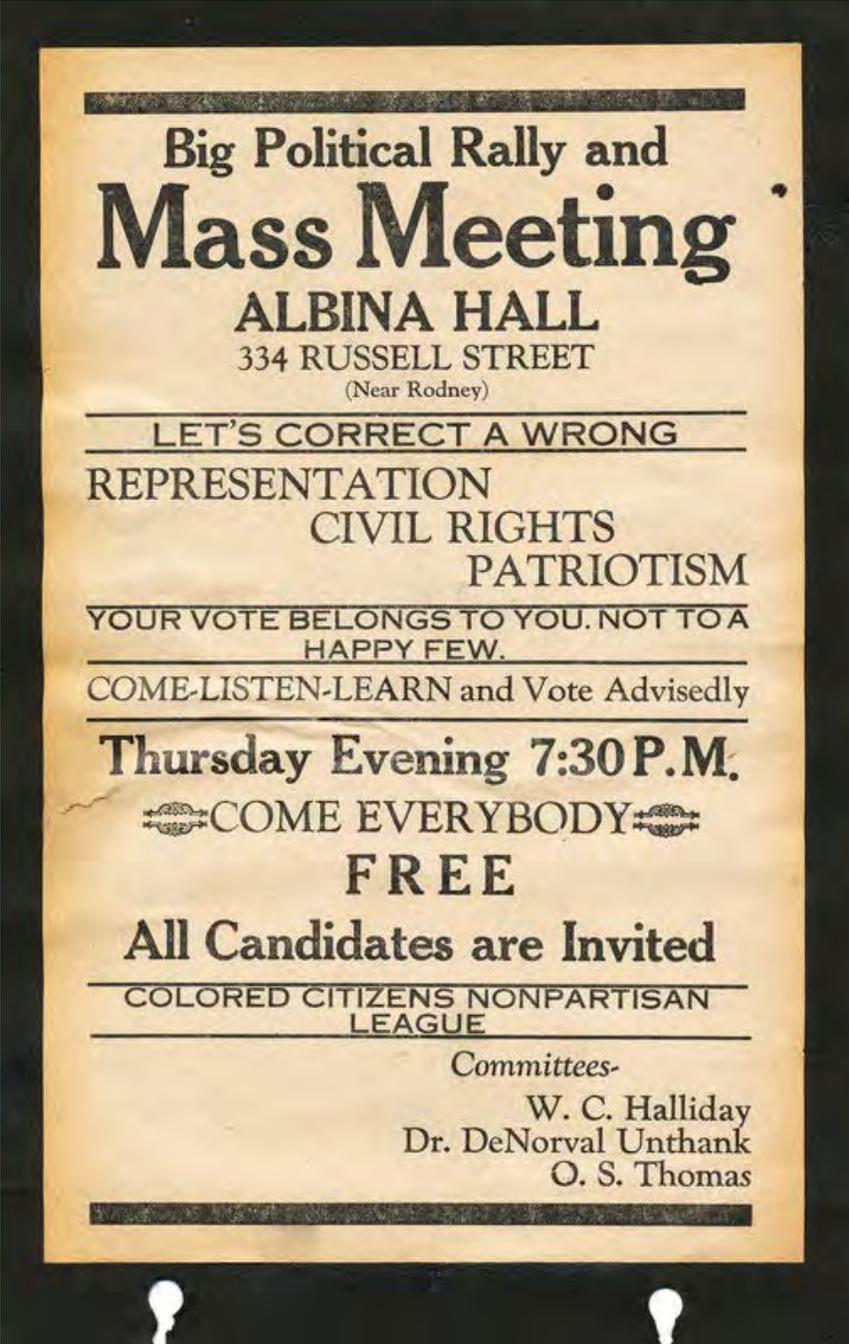
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Figure 17: Handbill for mass meeting in Albina in support of civil rights demonstrating early activism in Albina in the 1930s



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 18: Sign on Portland luncheonette in the 1940s, when Jim Crow laws prevailed



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

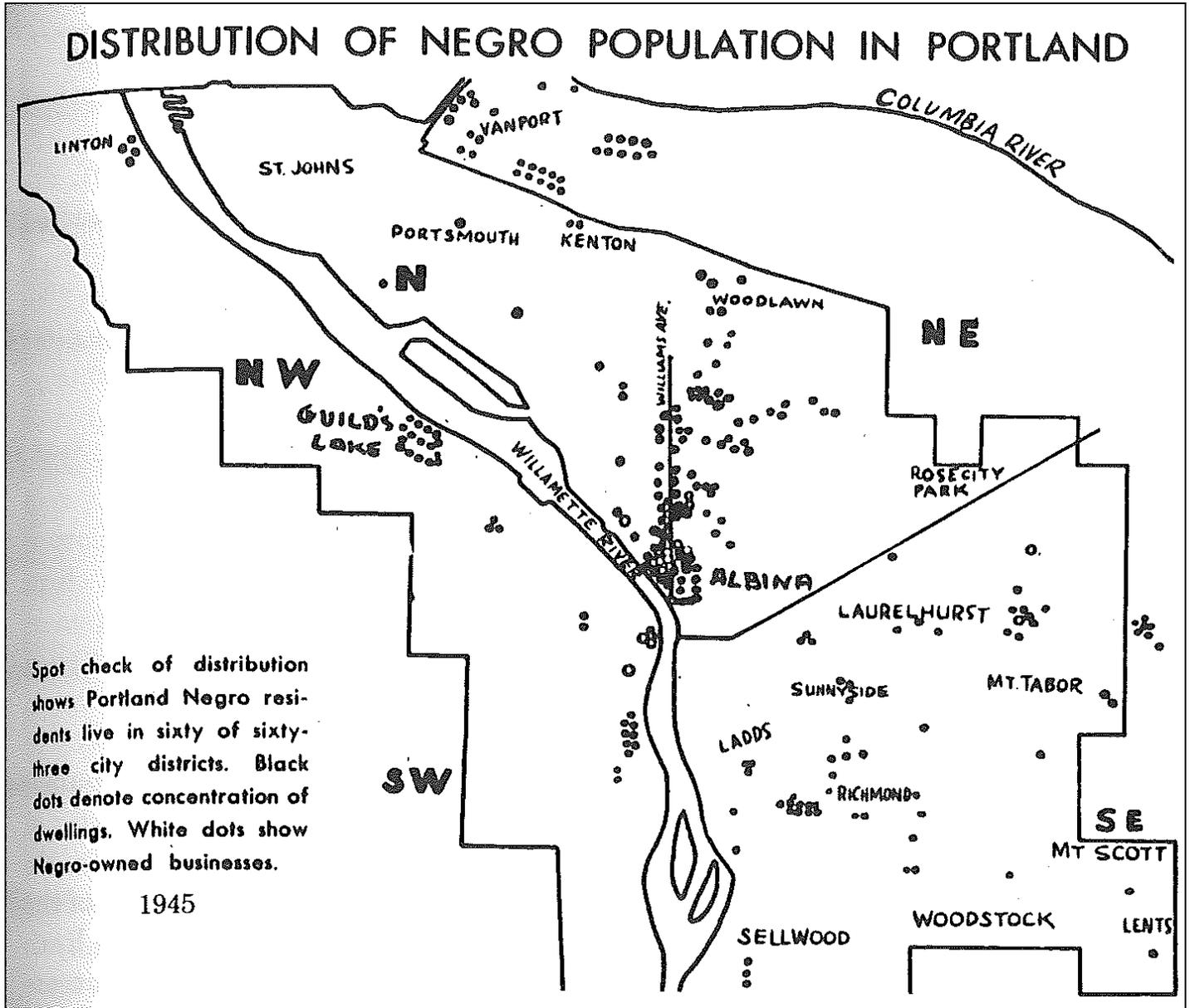
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Figure 19: Diagram showing the location of African American residences and businesses in Portland in 1945; they are heavily concentrated in the south end of Williams Avenue



Source: MacColl, *The Growth of a City*

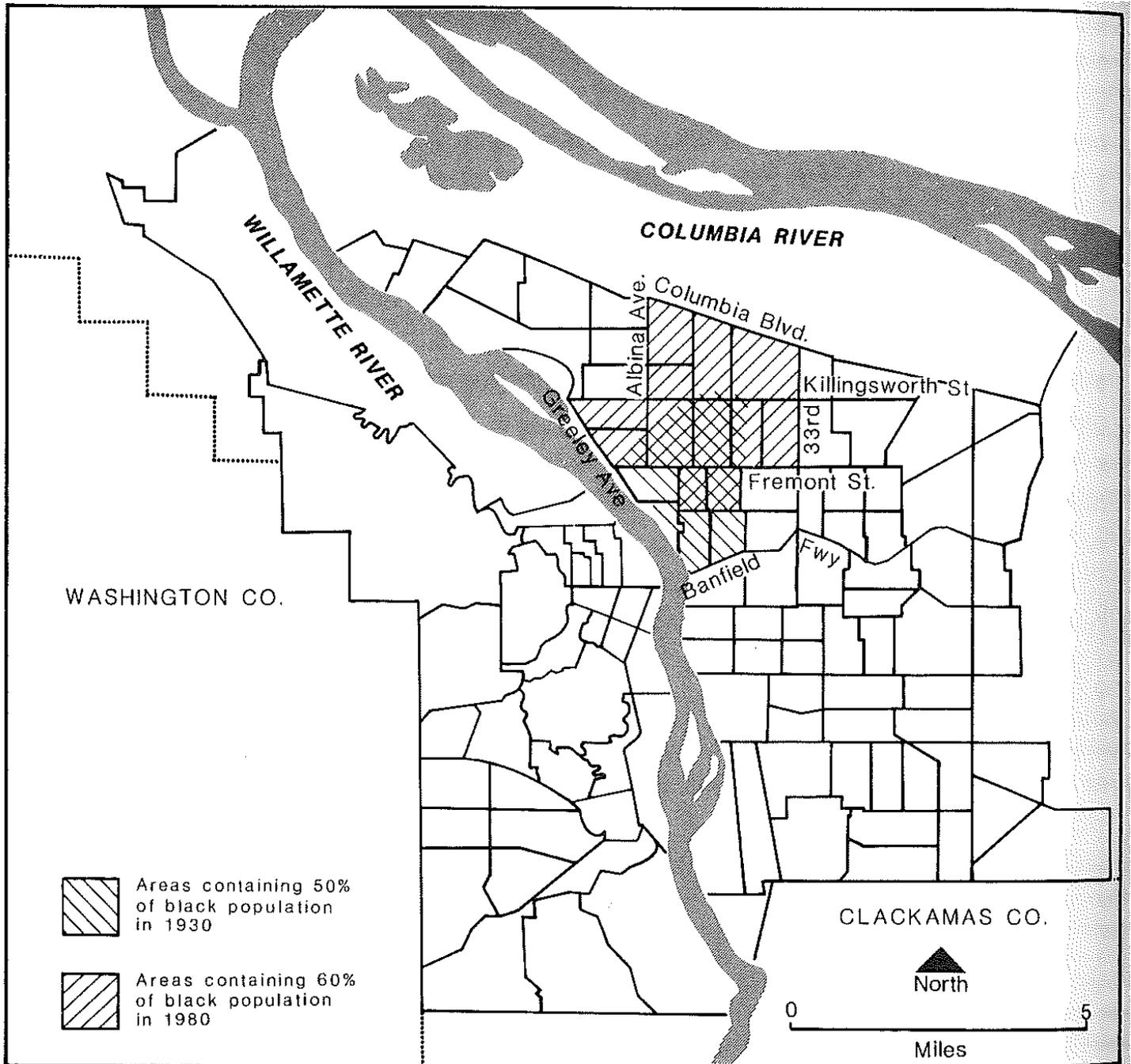
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Figure 20: Migration of the African American community between 1930 and 1980, due in part to large scale construction projects and urban renewal



Source: Abbott, *Portland Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City*

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Figure 21: Example of the type of handbill that Verdell Rutherford created and distributed to support various initiatives, in this case, Portland's proposed (and defeated) public accommodations law, ca 1950

I hope you are with me in voting
Yes on the Civil Rights Ordinance on
November 7th. This note is just to ask
that you also line up your family
and friends in support of the Ordinance.
Enclosed is some ammunition. We need
a lot of votes and your help will
be appreciated.

Sincerely,

P.S. - The right way to
vote is 500X Yes.

Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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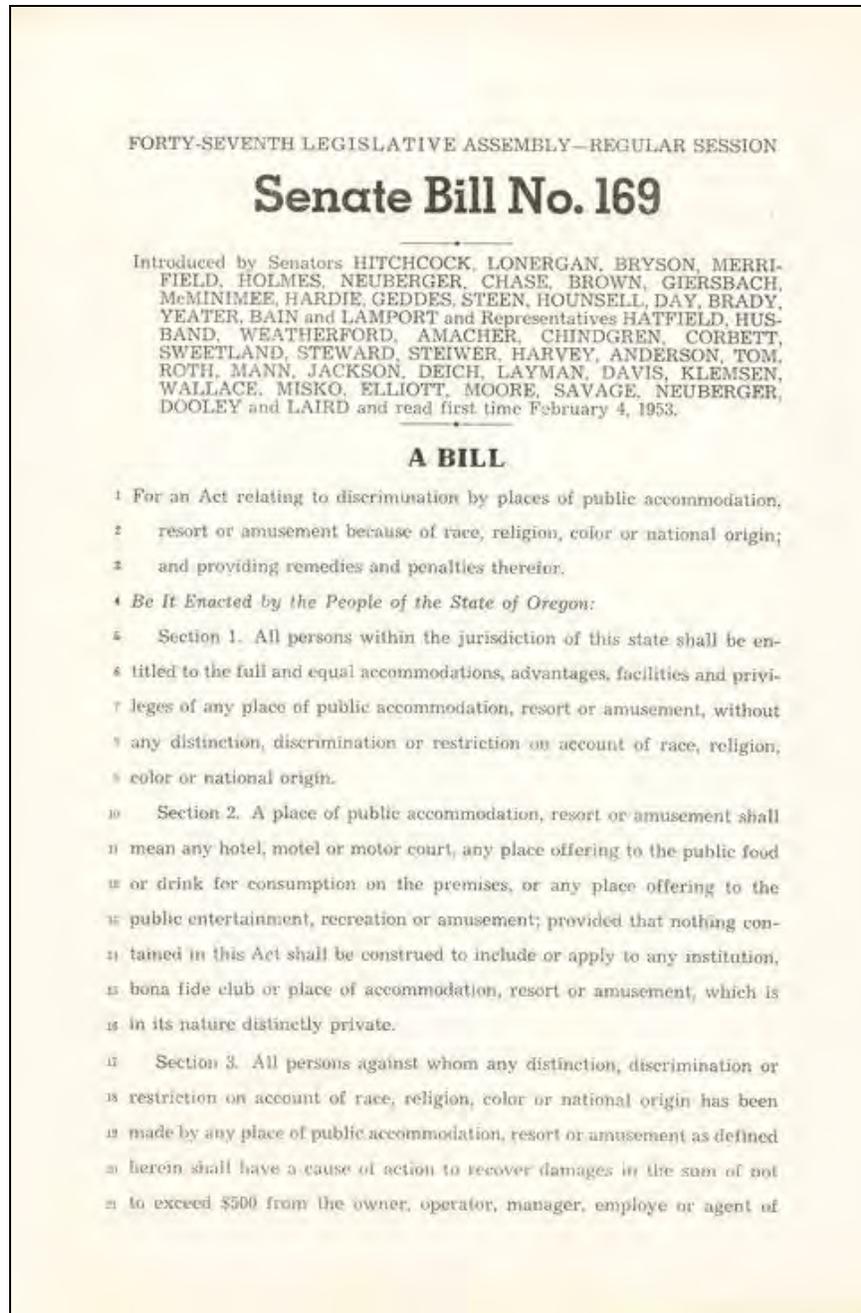
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Figure 22: First page of Senate Bill No. 169, the Civil Rights or Public Accommodations Act, signed into law in April 1953 and successful sponsorship by Otto Rutherford and the NAACP, among others



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

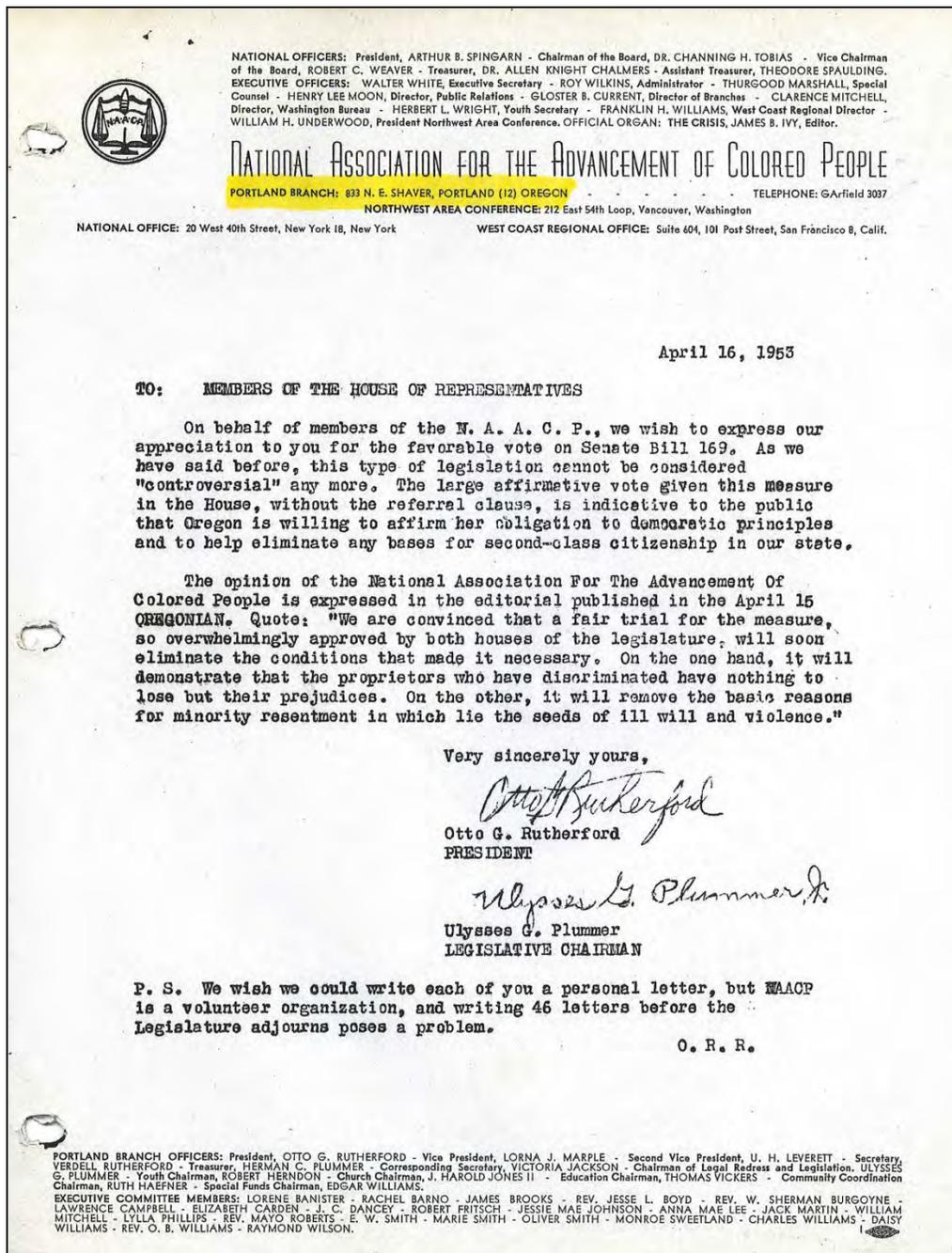
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Figure 23: Letter of thanks from Otto Rutherford as president of the NAACP to the legislators for passing Senate Bill No. 169 (note address of NAACP office is the address of the subject property)



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 24: NAACP Delegation thanking the sponsors of the Civil Rights Bill, April 13, 1953; Verdell and Otto Rutherford on the far right



NAACP Delegation thanking the sponsors of the civil rights bill.

Left to right seated: Senator Philip Hitchcock, Rep. Mark O. Hatfield.

Left to right standing: Edgar Williams, Marie Smith, Ulysess Plummer, Rev. J. Harold Jones, Lorna Maples, Verdell Burdine Rutherford and Otto Rutherford.

Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 25: Photo of Otto Rutherford (third from left) with Thurgood Marshall (second from left) on the occasion of Marshall's speech at a rally sponsored by the Portland NAACP, when Rutherford was president



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 26: Photo of Otto Rutherford and others in *Jet* magazine after settlement of anti-discrimination charge, January 13, 1955



▶ Splits Bias Suit Winnings: Paid a \$200 out-of-court settlement by Athena, Oregon, restaurant owner Frank Leach after threatening a racial discrimination suit, African student Godfrey Ibom (c.) shares money equally with **Otto Rutherford**, Portland NAACP head, and Miss Grace Choi of the University of Oregon's Foreign Students' Service Fund.

Source: *Jet Magazine*

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Figure 27: Photo of Otto and Verdell Rutherford being recognized for their collection of memorabilia, 1982



Source: PSU Special Collections: Verdell Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

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Figure 28: Senator Mark Hatfield, Otto and Verdell Rutherford, 1998 (Photo taken by Cathy Galbraith at subject property)



Source: *Bosco-Milligan Foundation*

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Figure 29: Otto Rutherford, narrating the OPB film "Local Color," 1999



Source: OPB's film, "Local Color"

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Figure 30: Otto and Verdell Rutherford in *The Oregonian's* "One Hundred and Fifty Years," December 4, 2000

OREGONIAN 12-4-2000 3M ■ ■ B11

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS

Bethenia Owens-Adair: A wagon-train child raised near Astoria, she was married at 14, left an abusive husband, taught herself to read and write, fought her way into medical school and became one of the first women to practice medicine on the frontier.

Joel Palmer: He pioneered almost everything he touched, from writing the guide to the Oregon Trail to fighting for Indian rights. He thought concentrating Native Oregonians on reservations was their best hope for survival.

Bud Parsons: Don't like the world of 150 channels and nothing on? Blame Bud. In 1948, the Astoria man cabled together a few homes and linked them to a community antenna atop the Astoria Hotel. One small step for Astoria; one giant leap for cable TV.

Linus Pauling: The founding father of molecular biology, a graduate of Oregon State University, remains the only person ever to receive two unshared Nobel prizes, one for chemistry in 1954 and the Peace Prize in 1962.

Sylvester Pennoyer: Ever wonder where Oregon got its independent streak? As governor, responding to an official query from President Cleveland, Pennoyer wired: "You attend to your business, and I'll attend to mine."

Portlandia: We've always had a weakness for the strong, silent type.

Michael Powell: Every great city is famous for something. Paris has the Eiffel Tower. New Delhi has the Red Fort. Portland has a bookstore.

Steve Prefontaine: "Pre" was sports star as cultural icon when Eugene was the running capital of the world. He's the only Oregonian to have two (bad) Hollywood movies made about him in the same year.

Jim Quinn: The president of Collins Pine led the first company in the United States to have a private forest certified for its commitment to ecosystem health.

Johnnie Ray: Elvis may have learned that wiggle from "The Prince of Wails." Johnny cried; women swooned.

Amanda Reed: In 1904, the wife of Simeon Reed left the bulk of her \$1.8 million estate to establish in Portland "an institution for the promotion of literature, science and art."

John Reed: Socially prominent Portlander Charles Jerome Reed had a restless son who wandered the world, journalist's pen in hand, in search of a revolution. He found at least three: the Mexican, the Russian and the women's.



OTTO RUTHERFORD
Mark Hatfield said that Otto Rutherford, shown here with his wife, Verdell, "was gentle as a dove for peace, fierce as a warrior for justice."

firms to start the Northwest Earth Institute and promote living simply.

Nancy Russell: She was First Friend to the Columbia River Gorge.

Otto Rutherford: His dad was a room-service barber in the Portland Hotel, barred by the color of his skin from working in the hotel's barbershop. In 1953, he led the 18th legislative fight in Oregon to outlaw discrimination in hotels, motels and restaurants. He won.

John Scharff: He retired in 1971 after 36 years as founding manager of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. To wander Steens Mountain with Scharff was to hike high places with a giant.

August Scherneckau: Reminding us that much that is Oregon is fleeting, in 1876 Scherneckau founded a settlement — locals pronounced it Shaniko — that became a rip-snortin', bawdy-house-boasting, whiskey-toting wool capital of the West. Then, suddenly, it was gone.

Arlene Schnitzer: Armed with a shoot-from-the-lip wit, a keen eye and a philanthropic heart, she opened her first art gallery in Portland in 1961. Modern art was on the Oregon map at last.

Les Schwab: He opened a tire store in Prineville in 1952. Beef, and changing a flat, has often been free since.

Jack Shipley: The president of the Applegate Partnership in Southern Oregon charted the course for a new kind of community organizing with timber companies, ranchers and conservationists working together in the watershed they share.

child prodigy, she reluctantly moved with her husband to Portland in 1864 only to be reduced to selling toiletries door-to-door. She became the state's leading early historian and friend to many prominent pioneers.

Michael Vidor: Way ahead of the taste curve, Vidor created a series of Portland restaurants unlike any that had come before: L'Auberge, Genoa; The Wood Stove, Tanuki and Macheesmo Mouse.

Howard Vollum: The first logger to see the Silicon Forest, he co-founded Tektronix in 1946.

John Waldo: "There are educational uses in the mountains and the wilderness which might well justify a wise people in preserving and reserving them for such uses." The 19th-century chief justice of the Oregon Supreme Court helped secure the designation of Crater Lake as a national park.

Barbara Walker: Portland is an uneasy metropolis, guilty of the way it thrusts through the pristine wilderness, Walker outranks almost everyone with her work to nurture nature in the city.

Bill Walton: Two words: world champion.

Henry Wemme: Next time you get stuck in rush-hour traffic, blame the Portland tentmaker. In 1899, Wemme decided to try something new to speed up his day: He bought a horseless car,riage.

Oswald West: Ever wondered why nobody owns the Oregon coast? In 1913, the gov brought all Oregon beaches into public ownership by declaring

Source: *The Oregonian*, via OHS

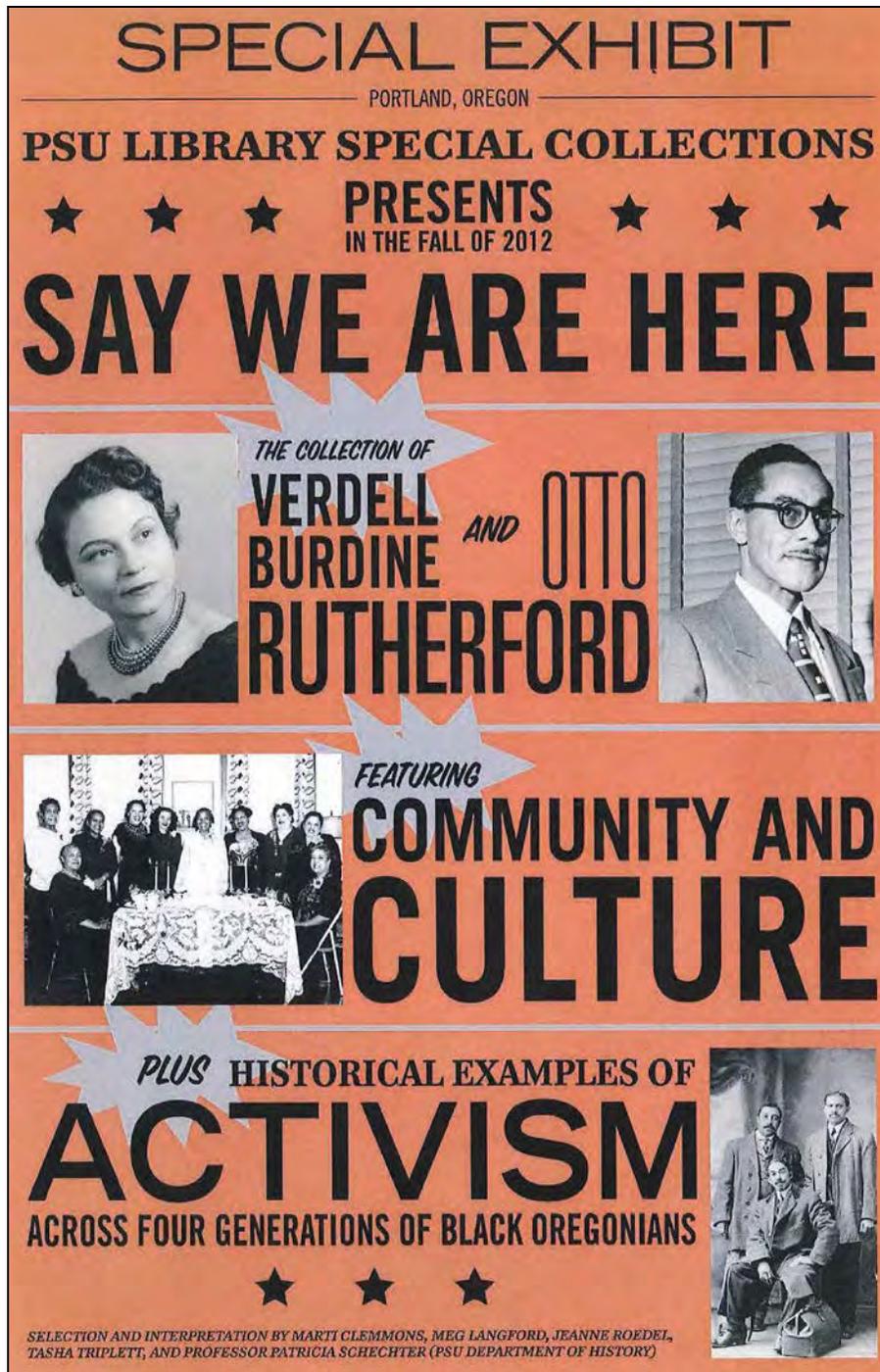
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Figure 31: Poster for the “Say We Are Here” exhibit on the Rutherford Collection at Portland State University, September 26, 2012 to January 31, 2013



Source: Portland State University “Say We Are Here” exhibit

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Figure 32: Photo of Charlotte Rutherford, speaking on the occasion of the opening of the exhibit on the Rutherford Collection at Portland State University, November 8, 2012



Source: Portland State University "Say We Are Here" exhibit



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National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY Rutherford House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Multnomah

DATE RECEIVED: 7/03/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/18/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001076

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/5/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*local level
social history
Ethnic heritage / Black
POS 1936-1953*

RECOM./CRITERIA A & B

REVIEWER U. S. B. A. L. I. N. E.

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 8/5/15

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



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, MD, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE, Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

Phone (503) 986-0690

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org

October 30, 2014

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:

RUTHERFORD, OTTO, HOUSE
833 NE SHAVER ST
PORTLAND, MULTNOMAH COUNTY

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination listed above to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

Sincerely,

Roger Roper
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.



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 Rutherford, William H. & Charlotte, House; Rutherford, Otto & Verdell, House

other names/site number Rutherford House (preferred)

multiple property document N/A

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

2. Location

street & number 833 NE Shaver Street not for publication

city or town Portland vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97212

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 X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A X B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

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 eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

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

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Returned

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.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: ASBESTOS; WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK (chimney)

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The **Rutherford House** is a 2,337 square foot, one-and-one-half story bungalow with a basement, a rectangular footprint, and a steeply pitched hip roof. Hip-roof dormers on the south, east, and north sides, and a dramatic tapered chimney on the east façade, embellish the roofline. The wood-frame building, originally clad in narrow beveled siding, is finished in asbestos shingle siding; it has a concrete foundation and composition shingle roof. The ca 1905 building displays a central entry on the front (south) façade, overlooking NE Shaver Street. It is flanked by a shallow canted bay window under boxed eaves to the left, complemented by a flush, three-part window to the right. A similar bay is located on the east façade of the building, which fronts on NE 9th Avenue. The residence, which is slightly raised, is accessed via two flights of stairs, which approach a small stoop covered with a gable roof supported by two substantial posts. A major change to the building is the enclosure of the recessed front porch, originally located on the east side of the front façade, in 1936. Additional character-defining features, which were added within the historic period, include modest classical references at the front entry and in the interior, which were added in conjunction with this renovation.

Narrative Description

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Rutherford House, a hip-roof bungalow constructed ca 1905, is located in the southerly portion of the King Neighborhood in northeast Portland. It faces south overlooking Shaver Street, which is characterized primarily by single-family homes. The property is at the northwest corner of NE 9th Avenue, which is also characterized by single-family residences. A historic church (now Mount Nebo Church of God) is located at the southwest corner of NE 9th and Mason to the north, on the same block as the subject property. The house is located five blocks east of NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd (formerly Union Avenue), a heavily traveled north-south arterial (Highway 99E), which is primarily commercial in character and undergoing rapid redevelopment. The house is three blocks north of NE Fremont Street, a busy east-west collector street, characterized by commercial development at Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., single-family houses and duplexes, neighborhood commercial uses at NE 7th Avenue, and Mt. Zion Baptist Church at NE 8th Avenue. Irving Park is located south of Fremont Street between NE 7th and about NE 11th Avenues in this area.

SITE AND LANDSCAPING

The Rutherford House is situated on a 5,000 square foot corner lot (50 feet wide and 100 feet deep), on a gentle rise from both NE 9th Avenue and Shaver Streets. A concrete drive sits immediately west of the property line, providing access to the adjacent property (owned and occupied by Charlesetta Rutherford, widow of Earle Rutherford, who was the son of Otto and Verdell Rutherford). Single-family houses are located to the east, west, north, and south. A variety of ferns and a boxwood hedge are located east and west of the entry, and on either side of the stairs. A large juniper bush sits near the southeast corner of the site. There are a variety of junipers, hydrangeas, and other shrubs along the east property line. To the north, in the rear yard, are buddleia bushes, along with two apple trees and a birch tree. A variety of ferns and other shrubs sit along the rear of the house. A large holly tree is near the northwest corner, and a holly and buddleia bush are located near the southwest corner. A medium size elderberry tree sits mid-way along the property line to the west. The house is accessed by three concrete steps at the sidewalk, a short walkway, and then six concrete risers to the porch. Wrought-iron railings are located on either side of both sections of stairs.

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EXTERIOR

The wood-frame Rutherford House is a one-and-one-half story bungalow with a basement. It is rectangular in plan and approximately 24 feet wide and 56 feet in length, 2,337 square feet in size, with a continuous concrete foundation. It is clad in asbestos shingle siding, which covers beveled siding. A simple frieze divides the first story from the upper half-level. The house has a steeply pitched, hip roof with three hipped dormers at the south, east, and north, and moderate boxed eaves. The roof consists of composition shingles over wood rafters. Gutters are K-style, connecting to downspouts. A tapered exterior chimney is located at the southeast corner of the house and an interior parged chimney rises near the north-south ridgeline to the north.ⁱ

The small, projecting entry porch above the concrete stairs is covered by an open gable with a simple elliptical arch. It is supported by two square, paneled posts with small capitals. Engaged pilasters are located at either side of the paneled entry door (not original), which is protected by a modern storm door. A later Colonial-style sconce provides porch lighting. The porch and stairs are enclosed with a painted, wrought-iron railing. On the façade, a bay with three leaded glass windows is west of the entry door. The central bay window is fixed, flanked by double-hung windows. East of the entry door is a set of three leaded-glass windows; the central window is fixed, and the windows on either side are casements with scissor hinges. Above the entry porch in the upper half story is a hip roof dormer with paired, one-over-one-light, wood-frame, double-hung windows. A narrow frieze separates the windows from the dormer roof, which has boxed eaves.

On the east elevation, the large exterior chimney with a brick cap pierces the hip roof near the front of the building. It is connected to the roof with a chimney rod. To the north of the chimney is a projecting bay with three one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. A hip roof dormer, which matches the south dormer, projects from the roof above the bay. North of the bay are two, individually placed, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. A garage beneath the house is located at the northeast corner, accessed by a concrete drive with concrete retaining walls on either side, with a mounted pipe rail on the north side. The pair of garage doors has six lights in the upper portion and three vertical panels below.

On the north (rear) elevation is a double-hung window near the northeast corner. A shed-roof porch projects from the house in the center. It was enclosed in the 1980s and has a metal door on the east side. It is accessed by two concrete steps at the sidewalk, a narrow walkway, and a wood stairway with seven risers and a simple 2 x 4 railing. A two-part aluminum-frame sliding window lights the enclosed porch. A hip roof dormer sits above and behind the enclosed porch. To the west of the enclosed porch are a double-hung window and a small fixed window at the northwest corner.

On the west elevation is a long, shallow projection that extends from behind the living room to the rear of the building. On this projection are two one-over-one-light, double-hung windows.

INTERIOR

The interior of the Rutherford House reflects the rectangular plan typical of the Craftsman style. The ground floor includes six rooms: living room, dining room, two bedrooms, kitchen, and bath. The entry opens onto a large living room running the width of the house, east to west. The easterly portion of the living room was constructed from the enclosure of the entry porch and removal of the hall partition in 1936. A brick fireplace is situated at the east wall, with a mantel with a scalloped trim piece below the mantelshelf; fluted pilasters flank the fireplace. Bookshelves are inset on either side of the fireplace, but are not permanently attached to the walls. A coved ceiling, picture rail, and molded baseboards were matched to original finishes in the westerly half of the living room. All woodwork is painted white. The living room is illuminated with two sets of windows: in the westerly half, a polygonal bay with a leaded-glass fixed center light and one-over-one-light, double-hung leaded-glass windows on either side, and in the easterly half, a set of three leaded-glass windows, with a fixed

ⁱ Parged or pargeting refers to a coat of cement mortar on the face of rough masonry construction.

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center light with a casement on either side. A ceiling light fixture with fan is from the 1970s. Fir floors are covered in wall-to-wall carpeting.

The dining room is entered through a plastered, arched opening from the living room. The dining room is finished with tall paneled wainscoting with a deep picture rail supported by modillions. The ceiling is plaster, with molding at the juncture of the walls and ceiling. On the east wall is a shallow canted bay with three one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. The original wood heat register is located in the fir floors at the windows. On the north wall is the kitchen entry, with a paneled swinging door. There is an original built-in-cabinet east of the kitchen door, with two glass cabinet doors and four drawers below. To the west of the kitchen entry and wainscot wall is a paneled entry door to the upstairs. At the northwest corner is a paneled entry door to the bedroom. A later ceiling fixture hangs in the center. Doors have simple brass hardware.

To the west is a bedroom which housed the National Associated of Colored People (NAACP) Credit Union records in the 1950s and which functioned as Verdell Burdine Rutherford's office in the 1970s to 1990s. The baseboards, ceiling molding, and small paneled closet door (south of the entry door) match that of the dining room. The crown molding above the doors has been removed; ceiling panels cover the original plaster ceiling. There is one double-hung, one-over-one-light window on the west wall. All of the five-panel doors are original. There is a beaded cornerboard on a portion of the closet wall.

To the north is a five-panel door entry to the master bedroom. Finishes and details match those of the other bedroom, including the baseboards, doors, crown molding and a one-over-one double-hung window in the west wall. A deep closet with a fixed window is located at the northwest corner.

To the north is the main bathroom, with a double-hung window on the north wall. The built-in tub, toilet, and sink are modern fixtures; the floor is vinyl and has a rubber base. There is one closet in the southwest corner. The bathroom opens to the west through a five-panel door to the back hall, which has vinyl flooring and rubber base.

To the east is a five-panel door in an angled wall that opens onto the kitchen, which also has vinyl flooring and a rubber base. Simple built-in cabinetry is located along the east and west walls. At the west wall above the stainless-steel sink are two aluminum frame, one-over-one-light windows installed in the original window frames. The counters are Formica. There is a remnant of original beadboard wainscot to the west of the swinging entry door to the dining room and a kitchen closet. In the north portion of the kitchen are short walls on either side of an opening into an original pantry with wallpapered walls. There is a new aluminum frame, one-over-one-light window on the north wall. Ceiling fixtures in the kitchen, pantry, and hall are modern.

To the north of the back hall is a hollow-core metal door leading to the rear porch, which was enclosed after a 1987 firebombing (see "Alterations"). Walls are plaster, with vinyl flooring and rubber base. There is an aluminum-frame sliding window in the north wall. A hollow-core metal door to the east enters the yard.

The stair to the upper floor of the Rutherford House is in the dining room. The stairway has fifteen risers and a simple wood handrail on brass mounts.

The upper floor is composed of three bedrooms and a bathroom. To the north of the stairway is a half-bath, accessed through a sliding hollow-core door, with vinyl floor, rubber base, and newer toilet and sink. There is an aluminum-frame sliding window on the north wall.

To the east of the stairway, above the kitchen, is a small windowless bedroom accessed by a hollow-core door. The ceiling slopes to the east.

A French door on the north wall opens into the bedroom above the dining room. Wood doors are plain with no hardware. The wood baseboard is plain and painted white. There are two recessed closets at the southwest

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and the southeast corners, with the ceiling sloping to the east. A pair of one-over-one-light windows is located on the east wall of the dormer in this location.

To the west of the stairway is a hall, above the bathroom and bedrooms below. A closet with vinyl accordion doors extends along the hallway. The hallway opens into the bedroom to the south, located above the living room. The door opening is simple, with a plain painted door with no hardware. A pair of one-over-one-light windows is on the south wall in the squared dormer, situated above a built-in window seat. The ceilings slope at the hip roof of the dormers. There are sloped recesses on either side of the dormer walls. A plain wood baseboard matches the other upper bedrooms, as do the modern ceiling fixtures. All upstairs flooring is hardwood with the exception of the half bath.

The basement is entered from the southerly end of the first floor back hall, through a five-panel door. The stairway has a simple round wood handrail, with brass mounts; twelve risers covered in linoleum lead to the basement, which is mostly open.

The basement has a concrete floor and the ceiling under the dining room is covered in acoustical tile; walls are parged and partially paneled. To the west of the stairway is a laundry room with tubs, and a parged brick wall to the east. On the north wall near the west corner is the original door with a diagonal brace to the garage, now fixed in place. A wide beadboard wall runs to the west of the door and ends at the latched door to the garage, which is also clad in wide beadboard.

The basement under the west half of the living room features a cement wall covered in burlap. An oil furnace is located east of the stairs, connected to the central chimney.

The garage is located under the kitchen, hall, and bathroom, and runs the full width of the house. The outer walls in the garage are parged, and the ceiling is beadboard, as is the interior wall. A pair of garage doors, with six glass lights above and three vertical panels below, is on the east wall. Wire is mounted over the glass.

The basement is where the mimeograph machine was located that was used by Verdell and Otto Rutherford to print thousands of NAACP meeting minutes and notices, and Bethel AME Church bulletins.

ALTERATIONS

Alterations to the house are well-documented: in November 1927 a new furnace was installed; in August 1930 and the late 1940s, the main floor bathroom was upgraded; and in the summer of 1929, a 12' x 18' garage was built beneath the house, accessed at the northwest corner with a pair of garage doors with six lights above and three vertical panels below. A curb was cut and a concrete driveway was installed to the property line. A 2" tongue-and-groove wall was built separating the garage from the rest of the basement. A cement floor was poured at that time.

In the spring of 1936, to meet the need for additional living space, the original recessed entry porch was enclosed, doubling the size of the living room. Leaded-glass windows, with a fixed center window flanked by two casements windows, were installed in the new wall on the east half of the front (south) façade. At that time, the windows in the polygonal bay in the west half, including the fixed center light, and flanking one-over-one-light double-hung windows, were also replaced with matching leaded-glass windows in the existing openings.

A new projecting entry with Classical details was added with a simple gable with an elliptical arch soffit supported two square, paneled posts and engaged pilasters to each side of the new paneled door. The beveled siding was covered with asbestos shingles. A large exterior brick chimney was added at the east wall, near the southeast corner, for the new fireplace in the enlarged living room. The design work and plans were executed by Donald Rutherford. On the interior, the half-wall foyer and partition wall were removed and a brick fireplace with mantel and brick hearth was added. The coved ceiling, picture molding, and base were all

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exactly duplicated in the newly enlarged living room. In the upstairs, hardwood floors were installed. All of the alterations were completed during the historic period and are of exceptional quality.

In the 1950s, the original interior basement door to the rear of the garage was sealed when a washer and dryer were installed. The large, open upper story was divided into three bedrooms, and a closet with accordion doors was added along the west wall under the eaves.

In March of 1987, the house was firebombed in an incident determined to be the mis-identification of the location of a drug-related conflict. Primary damage was to the rear of the house. Roof framing was repaired on the north roof dormer and north wall. The screened-in rear (north) porch was enclosed and a metal door was installed, the bathroom cabinets were replaced, the kitchen sink was replaced, new aluminum windows were installed in the north roof dormer. In the breakfast nook at the north wall, the pair of windows at the east wall above the kitchen sink were replaced with aluminum windows in the original frames, and new vinyl flooring with a rubber base was added in the kitchen.

In April of 1999, the house was re-roofed with new composition shingles, the leaded-glass windows were fully restored, and the interior basement walls and the entry porch columns were repaired.

CONCLUSION

The ca 1922 photograph of the Rutherford House shows that it was a classic early Craftsman bungalow that retained vestiges of the Victorian era in the bay windows and steeply pitched hip roof. The overall horizontal emphasis of this house, however, and the recessed porch and broad entry stairs, presaged the later widely popular Craftsman bungalow, which eschewed some of the Victorian-era features. Later changes to the house removed some of the character-defining features of the bungalow. These changes, however, occurred within the historic period and were undertaken by the Rutherford family. Further, the building, which is significant under Criterion A and B, retains its overall form, character-defining bay windows, and front-facing hip roof dormer; in short, its integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. The house still conveys the reasons for its significance.

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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, object, 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.)

Social History

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1923-1965

Significant Dates

1923, Date Rutherfords purchased the house

1936, Date of Otto Rutherford's marriage

and move to house

1953, Passage of the Oregon Civil Rights Bill

authored in part by the Rutherfords

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Rutherford, William H.; Rutherford, Otto G.;

Rutherford, Verdell Burdine

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Returned

Period of Significance (justification) The Period of Significance extends from 1923, when the Rutherfords purchased the house, to 1965, the end of the historic period. Otto and Verdell Rutherford's activities in the Civil Rights Movement largely took place from the 1930s through the 1960s. Their advocacy continued into the 1970s, but they also shifted their focus about this time, toward documentation of African American history in Portland. They lived in the house until 1999.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Rutherford House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local and state levels. It is significant under Criterion A, Social History, for its association with Oregon's Civil Rights Movement during the decades of advocacy, the 1930s to the 1970s, through the achievements of Otto G. Rutherford, the son of William H. Rutherford, and his wife Verdell Burdine Rutherford. The location of the Rutherfords' residence in the King neighborhood of Albina also references the story of this neighborhood and its accommodation of the African American community in the years when few other neighborhoods were open to African Americans. The story of Albina is integral to the history of African Americans in Portland.

The Rutherford House is also significant under Criterion B, Ethnic Heritage, for its association with William H. Rutherford, a pioneer African American business owner in Portland from 1907 to 1934, and his son Otto and daughter-in-law Verdell and their activities on behalf of the NAACP and Civil Rights Movement. It is the only extant property in Oregon associated with the Rutherford family during these years of significant economic, political, and professional achievements, and has been in continuous family ownership since 1923. It has been in ownership by an African American family longer than any other property in the city of Portland.²

The Period of Significance for the property is 1923, when the Rutherfords purchased the house, to 1965, the end of the historic period. William and Lottie Rutherford lived in the house for the rest of their lives. Their son, Otto G. Rutherford married Verdell Burdine in 1936, and they remained living in the subject property until 1999, when both relocated to senior care facilities. The house is still owned by a descendent of the Rutherford family, Charlotte Rutherford (Otto and Verdell's daughter), who supports its listing in the National Register of Historic Places in acknowledgement of her family's contribution to Portland's African American heritage.

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

RUTHERFORD FAMILY HISTORY: THE FIRST GENERATION

The following history of the Rutherford family establishes the pioneering efforts of William H. Rutherford and his brother to find opportunities in Portland in the late 1890s, when there were few local opportunities for skilled work for African Americans, and in the first decade of the twentieth century, when they established their own successful businesses. It follows the careers of William and Lottie's sons, demonstrating the Rutherford's success in raising four educated and accomplished sons. The text focuses particularly on the lives of son Otto G. Rutherford and his wife Verdell Burdine Rutherford, who became central to the Civil Rights Movement in Portland and Oregon in the 1930s through the 1970s. Both Otto and Verdell, but particularly Verdell, went on to also become known for their documentation of African American history in Portland, with a special focus on the Civil Rights Movement.

William H. Rutherford

William H. Rutherford was born in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1870, the oldest son of William H. and Cornelia Hunt Rutherford. His father, William H. Rutherford (1852-1910), was a barber who later became a teacher and business owner, who had moved to Columbia from Macon, Georgia. His father had two brothers; a doctor, who settled in North Carolina, and a doctor who graduated from Howard University and moved to Oakland, California, and one sister, who married and moved to Mississippi. All were emancipated from slavery through the Emancipation Proclamation. His mother, Cornelia Hunt Rutherford, was born to a Native American mother and African American father; she was born into slavery in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1851, and later emancipated.

² Bosco-Milligan Foundation, *Cornerstones of Community – Buildings of Portland's African American History* (Portland, OR. 1997).

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William H. Rutherford was the oldest of four children born to William and Cornelia Rutherford. William graduated from Allen Union School, and he and his brother Edward became barbers, operating a family-owned shop in Columbia. Both William and Edward moved to Portland, Oregon, in 1897. Their brother Harry also barbered, and then went into business in Columbia with his father, owning and operating a cigar factory and regalia manufacturing company. Their sister Mamie never married. The William H. and Cornelia Rutherford House in Columbia, South Carolina, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, along with the house built in 1924 by the widow of Harry Rutherford, for their association with the advancement of the Rutherford family from servitude to positions of respect and prominence over three generations.³

The Rutherford brothers left Columbia in 1897 for new opportunities in Portland. The professional barbers were recruited by fellow Columbian and African American, John C. Logan, who was head waiter at the Portland Hotel. Logan had helped recruit other African Americans from the Carolinas with hotel experience for the Portland Hotel's opening in 1890. As African Americans, the Rutherford brothers were prohibited from working in the hotel barbershop; they were "private" barbers who provided haircuts and shaves in the rooms of hotel guests.

Employment at the Portland Hotel was prestigious, and one of the few places that employed African Americans outside the railroads. In the late 1890s, Portland's African American population was extremely small – no more than 1,000 people – when the Rutherford brothers relocated 2,900 miles from their hometown of Columbia. Their decision to leave was undoubtedly influenced by changes in South Carolina's political and cultural atmosphere for African Americans in the 1890s; its progressive atmosphere following Reconstruction had grown dramatically repressive in a very short time.

Settling into their new hometown, the brothers obtained their certificates from the State of Oregon's Barbers Board of Examiners in 1899. By 1901, they were among the eight African American founders of the Enterprise Investment Company, which invested \$10,000 to buy property and build a two-story building on North Larrabee Avenue (demolished for construction of Memorial Coliseum in 1958) in 1903. In 1902, William and Edward Rutherford traveled back to Columbia, South Carolina, where they married and returned with their wives to rented homes (no longer extant) on the west side of downtown Portland.

William H. Rutherford married Lottie White, who was born in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1877, whose full name was Charlotte Elizabeth Shannon. She and her brothers were raised in a foster home and took the name White from their foster parents. She graduated from Scotia Seminary in Columbia and arrived in Portland as a new bride at the age of 25. Two years later, in 1904, the first of four sons was born, followed by a second son in 1906.

In 1907, William and Edward left the Portland Hotel to open their first business, The Club Café Shaving Parlor at NW 9th Avenue and Flanders Street (no longer extant). They hired a third barber and added a haberdashery line in one half of the shop, changing the business name to Rutherford Brothers Barbers and Haberdashery. In 1914, they moved the business to 414-418 NW 6th Avenue (no longer extant), a corner location at NW Broadway and Flanders, one block from the Golden West Hotel. This hotel was opened by William D. Allen in 1906 as Portland's only African American hotel. A confectionary with an ice cream parlor was added in the haberdashery. The Rutherford brothers stayed at this location until 1930.

The Great Depression had a more devastating economic impact on African Americans as Caucasians began to seek jobs they had formerly disdained. The African American newspaper, *The Advocate*, published numerous articles on the loss of employment, including the firing of the waiters at the Portland Hotel, replaced for a time with Caucasian women. Many African American businesses were forced to close; W.D. Allen closed the Golden West in 1930, relocating across the Willamette River to 2272 N. Interstate (no longer extant), into the Medley Hotel. Waldo Bogle's Barbershop, which had been in the Golden West, also crossed the river to

³ National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places: Fair-Rutherford and Rutherford Houses (Columbia SC, 1984).

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1608 N. Williams Avenue (no longer extant). The Rutherford Brothers also relocated to 1608 N. Williams (no longer extant), as Rutherford's Tonsorial, their new (and last) barbershop. The Depression forced its closure in 1934, and the brothers barbered for others. William H. Rutherford became a barber on the Union Pacific Railroad, from which he retired in the 1940s.

In 1910, both William H. and Edward W. Rutherford and their wives purchased and lived in adjacent homes at SE 8th and Ash Streets (no longer extant). William and Lottie had two more sons in the 8th Street house. In 1919, seeking a home in the country for the health of one son, they bought a home and moved to 8944 N. Drummond Avenue (no longer extant), where they remained until 1923. Beginning in 1919, the Portland Realty Board adopted a policy of restricting the sale of properties to "Negros and Orientals" in the Albina District – inner North and Northeast Portland, near the Steel and Broadway Bridges. The new article in the Realtors Code of Ethics called for punitive measures against agents who violated the policy. Walter Green was an African American who could "pass" for Caucasian; active in business and real estate, he purchased properties for African Americans, including the Drummond Avenue house for William and Lottie Rutherford.

By 1922 the Rutherford family had tired of traveling the great distance to the Portsmouth District, to and from work, church, and social activities. Walter Green found them another house at 833 NE Shaver Street. In 1923 William and Lottie Rutherford purchased and moved into the subject property, which begins the period of significance. It remains in Rutherford family ownership to the present.

William H. Rutherford was a charter member of Enterprise Lodge #1, Free and Accepted Masons. Lottie Rutherford spent most of her married life raising four sons. During World War I, she worked at the U.S. Custom House (where John Logan was the superintendent of custodians); occasionally she worked checking coats during special events at the Multnomah Hotel, and she worked at the new "Colored YWCA" in 1927. William and Lottie Rutherford were active members of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church; they were among a small group of church members who mortgaged their homes for the new Bethel AME Church building, constructed in 1916 at 1239 N. Larrabee (demolished in 1958 for Memorial Coliseum).

In the mid-1920s, William H. Rutherford's mother, Cornelia Hunt Rutherford, who had been widowed since 1910, moved to Portland along with William's sister Mamie. They alternated residency between the subject property and Edward Rutherford's SE 8th Street house. Mamie Rutherford died in the late 1920s and Cornelia Hunt Rutherford died in the early 1930s. William's brother Edward died in 1942, from a long-term kidney ailment. Edward's widow, Jeanette, whom he married in 1928 after the death of his first wife Octavia, sold the 8th Street house (no longer extant) and returned to Columbia, South Carolina, in the 1940s.

In October 1935, Lottie Rutherford died at the age of 58, after suffering a stroke two weeks earlier. William H. Rutherford remained at the subject property and died in 1955 following several strokes at the age of 85.

RUTHERFORD FAMILY HISTORY: THE SECOND GENERATION

William H. Rutherford, Jr.

William H. Rutherford, Jr. was the first son of William and Lottie Rutherford. Born on March 25, 1904, he went to Philadelphia following the completion of eighth grade; a maternal aunt and uncle of Lottie Rutherford had moved to Portland but decided to return to Philadelphia, and William, Jr. left with them. He attended high school in Philadelphia for a time, returned to Portland where he attended Benson High School, and ultimately graduated in Philadelphia. In 1922-1924, he worked at the Portland Hotel, and then returned to Philadelphia to attend school for auto mechanics. He married Elizabeth Haines there in 1925, and he and his wife soon had a daughter. He died in Philadelphia of pneumonia in 1927 at the age of 23.

In late 1929, his widow Elizabeth and daughter Betty moved to Portland and resided at the subject property. In the early 1930s, Elizabeth married Eugene Carden, a chauffeur for Mrs. C.S. Jackson, whose husband owned the *Oregon Journal* (he was also a deputy sheriff in the late 1920s, and later worked in the circulation

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department of *The Oregonian*), and moved to the Carden home at 5214 N. Maryland Avenue (extant). They remained here until Eugene Carden's death in 1978. Elizabeth Rutherford Carden and her daughter Betty Fuller moved to California in 1980; Mrs. Carden died there in 1989.

Alan D. Rutherford

The second son of William and Lottie Rutherford, Alan D. Rutherford, was born on September 6, 1906. He was a sickly child and his parents, in the interest of his health, moved the family to the house on North Drummond in 1919. The sons always referred to that house as "the sticks," given its location far from the center of town. Alan graduated from Jefferson High School and then went to Philadelphia to attend normal school in New Jersey, planning a teaching career. He was at his older brother William's side when he died in Philadelphia in 1927. He taught school for a time and returned to Portland to attend George Fox College in Newberg, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the mid-1930s. He received his Master's Degree from Temple University in Philadelphia, and did post-graduate study at Columbia University and Peabody College in Nashville. In 1937, he moved to Statesville, North Carolina, to teach at Morningside High School, where he became principal. In 1969, he was promoted from principal to Assistant Superintendent of the Statesville school district. In 1971, the school board changed the name of Morningside High School to the Alan D. Rutherford School. Alan Rutherford retired in 1972 and then made his home in Raleigh, North Carolina. Never married, he died in Raleigh, North Carolina, in April 1979 at the age of 73.

Otto G. Rutherford

Otto G. Rutherford, the third son of William and Lottie Rutherford, was born on February 5, 1911, in the East 8th Street home during a "silver thaw", when ice begins to melt. By the time Dr. James Merriman, Portland's only African American physician, arrived by horse-drawn sleigh from his home at NE 14th Avenue and Prescott Street, Otto had already been delivered. Otto attended Hawthorne and then Peninsula Elementary schools, as did his brothers, where they were the only African American children. When the family moved to the subject property, he attended Highland School (now King), and graduated from there in the 8th grade in January 1925, the only African American in his class.

As a youth, he sold the *Chicago-Defender* newspaper; among his customers were the waiters at the Portland Hotel, where he regularly visited their dressing quarters. Through time spent in his father's barbershop, along with the Portland Hotel, he knew many more of the established African American men than most other children; this would later yield the oral history of Portland's early African American community.

In 1928, he graduated from Jefferson High School. He went to work for the Seely family, including a year in Los Angeles. He attended Los Angeles Junior College for two years, where he studied psychology. In 1933, he returned to Portland and went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad, where he was employed for 13 years.

On April 11, 1936, he married Verdell Burdine in Oakland, California; they were married by Reverend Daniel Hill, former pastor at Portland's Bethel AME Church, who had been transferred to Oakland in 1935. Otto and Verdell Rutherford returned to Portland and to the subject property, to begin their married life of 64 years, six decades of civil rights activism, and the documentation and preservation of Portland's African American history.

Otto Rutherford worked throughout his life to improve the working and living conditions of Oregonians. Because of rampant discrimination against African American workers in Oregon, Mr. Rutherford was forced to work jobs that were beneath his intellectual abilities during the Depression and Second World War. After passage of fair employment laws in the mid-1950s, he was hired as the first African American employee at Dehen Knitting Company. He became a master knitter and organized the workers from Local 901 of the Amalgamated Clothing Worker's Union, securing benefits and safety standards. His employment with Dehen ended shortly thereafter.

As a result of federal anti-poverty money in the cities and states, he was able to find employment as the Director of Housing at the Neighborhood Service Center. For the first time, he was paid for his intellectual

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abilities. He was gradually able to enjoy the fruits of his labors as the executive director of the Urban League Senior Adult Service Center, now the Northeast Multicultural Senior Center. He retired from this position in 1976.

His thoughts on race and class were progressive for his time and showed the influence of his favorite thinkers, which included W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Malcom X, and Richard Wright. His funeral brochure described his interests and hobbies: "He was known to enjoy Duke Ellington's orchestra, Chester Himes's novels, and the company of his family, lodge and railroad brothers and many friends." Otto Rutherford died on August 14, 2000, at the age of 89. His willingness to speak out against racial injustice was captured in the 1990 video "Local Color," in which he recounts Oregon's civil rights battles. When asked why it had taken so long to pass Oregon's Civil Rights Bill, Otto Rutherford answered without hesitation, "*Some people had to die first.*"

Mr. Rutherford's life accomplishments were documented in a 1990 Oregon Public Broadcasting program on the history of African Americans in Portland, entitled "Local Color." Over the years, Otto Rutherford held the following positions: Exalted Ruler, Billy Webb Elks Lodge #1050 (located in the former "Colored" YWCA building, extant); 32nd Degree Mason, Prince Hall Affiliation; President, PanHellenic Conference, Los Angeles; Secretary, Brotherhood, Bethel AME Church; Secretary-Treasurer, Local 456, P.O.D.C.W.-A.F.L.; Charter Member and President, North Central YMCA-Y's Men; Secretary, Equal Rights Committee; Charter Member and Vice-President, NAACP Federal Credit Union; President, Portland Branch NAACP; Board Member, Portland Urban League.

Thomas Donald Rutherford

Donald (as he was always known) Rutherford was the fourth and last son of William and Lottie Rutherford, born on January 14, 1913. Lottie Rutherford was not in good health after the birth; two-year old Otto went to live with family friends, Mr. and Mrs. W.H. ("Ma") Lewis, on NE 52nd Avenue (no longer extant), on the outskirts of Milwaukie for a time. Donald attended Highland School (now King) and graduated from Benson High School. Mechanically gifted from childhood, he was renowned for inventions and technical accomplishments, such as stage lighting for church productions and rebuilding family appliances. During high school, he worked selling newspapers at Union Station.

Following graduation from Benson High School in 1932, he worked for four years at the Portland Hotel, and then attended Fisk University for one year in 1936. He transferred to the University of California at Berkeley for one year in 1937, and then transferred to the Oregon State University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Engineering. He left Oregon in 1940. During World War II, he worked at Douglas Aircraft as a tool designer. He married in 1943. From 1945 to 1957, he worked for the Howard Hughes Tool Company in their Aircraft Division, in Culver City, California. He designed the engine controls for Hughes' Flying Aviation Boat, also known as the "Spruce Goose" (although it has a molded birch skin), and was a member of its first and only flight. He was the only African American of the eighteen-member crew and Howard Hughes was aboard the flight. The Spruce Goose is now the major attraction at the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in McMinnville, Oregon. He retired from his later private practice, Rutherford Associates Engineers, and lived in Marina Del Ray, California. His wife Judy, who was a school principal in Los Angeles prior to retirement, died during a visit to Portland in 1995. Donald Rutherford invented and holds patent rights on the touch latch (a metallic cabinet door closure) and the sliding door design in Volkswagen buses. He died in 2012.

Verdell Burdine Rutherford

Verdell Burdine Rutherford, the wife of Otto Rutherford, was born on January 1, 1913, in Wainwright, Oklahoma (Indian Territory), the daughter of Margaret Boles (1885-1986), and Earl Burdine, Sr. (1881-1928); Margaret Boles was born and raised in Arkansas, and Earl Burdine was a freed man from Kansas. Verdell was the third of seven children and the Burdine family moved to Coos Bay (then Marshfield), Oregon when she was six weeks old. Mrs. Burdine, an elementary school teacher for the Creek Nation, was determined to move to a locale with no danger of tornados. In 1920, the family moved to Union Gap, Washington, and a short time

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later to Yakima, Washington. A barber by trade, Earl Burdine turned to farming in Oregon and Washington. On December 31, 1928, Earl Burdine died, leaving his wife to raise the seven children.

Verdell Burdine graduated from Yakima High School in 1931. She moved to Portland, joining her older sister Dolores at the home of their aunt, Lula Gragg, a close friend of Lottie Rutherford. The Burdine sisters had visited Portland often and were well-acquainted with Portland's African American community. They attended Bethel AME Church and participated in church, social, and other community activities, including the NAACP. Verdell Burdine worked for a family who moved to San Francisco in 1933. Having ended a marriage engagement, she relocated with them, and remained there through 1935. Her on-and-off relationship with Otto Rutherford culminated in their marriage in April 1936, and her move to the subject property.

In addition to raising three children, Verdell Rutherford worked as secretary for Dr. DeNorval Unthank, who had come to Portland in early 1930 and fought racial discrimination for most of his life; in 1931 his Westmoreland neighborhood (SE Portland) home was vandalized and neighbors asked him to move. He was the Oregon Medical Association's Doctor of the year in 1958, and was also president of the NAACP. Verdell Rutherford was active in the Oregon Association of Colored Women's Clubs (OACW), and was a long-time member and officer (including president) of the OACW's Culture Club. In 1959 she was named the OACW's Woman of the Year. She had been an NAACP member in Yakima, along with her mother and sisters, and also joined the Portland Branch.

With her permanent move to Portland in 1936, Verdell Rutherford developed a passion for Portland's African American history, and she devoted her life to its documentation and preservation. She was meticulous in her organization of photographs, newspapers, programs, pamphlets, letters, minutes, directories, and other memorabilia relating to Portland's African American history, as well as the history of the NAACP, and the founding records and early years of the NAACP Credit Union, of which she was an officer. As NAACP secretary for many years, she was responsible for minutes and notices, and she powered the mimeograph machine in the basement of the subject property to secure community participation in and support of all of the civil rights issues of the 1940s through the 1960s. She is acknowledged and respected as Portland's premier African American historian, and she tirelessly organized exhibits and assisted in every major effort to document, promote, and preserve the history of the African American community.

She was immensely interested in the preservation of the Rutherford family home at 833 NE Shaver Street, and recognized its significance in Portland's, and Oregon's, African American history. She enthusiastically supported its nomination to the National Register. Verdell Burdine Rutherford died on February 27, 2001, two weeks after suffering a heart attack, and following a stroke two years earlier. Her library and papers were donated to Portland State University's library (by daughter Charlotte), and the collection is named for her.

Otto and Verdell Rutherford: 1936-2000

Otto Rutherford met Verdell Burdine when they were eight and six years old, respectively. In 1919, her family stopped in Portland to spend a Sunday during a trip from Marshfield to Yakima. The Burdines attended Bethel AME Church with friends and young Otto took Verdell to Sunday school. They were married in April 1936. Their first son, William, was born in 1937, followed by another son, Earle, in 1942, and a daughter, Charlotte, in 1947. Together, Otto and Verdell Rutherford were the leadership of the Portland branch of the NAACP at a crucial time. The NAACP pushed for equal opportunity and the end of racial discrimination in the 1940s and 1950s in public accommodations, employment, education, and housing in the state of Oregon and nationally. Otto Rutherford's leadership and forthright ideas on racial equality, combined with Verdell Rutherford's writing and publishing skills, provided newsletters and notices that galvanized community support. In 1953, Otto and Verdell Rutherford helped write the Oregon Civil Rights Bill and served as President and Secretary of the Portland NAACP when the bill was passed after 18 failed legislative sessions beginning in 1919. The Rutherfords had advocated for passage at those legislative sessions, beginning in the late 1930s. The NAACP Federal Credit Union was organized in 1955 during their time of leadership, and was located in their home.

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Otto Rutherford's August 18, 2000, obituary, published on *The Oregonian's* front page, included a quote from former Senator Mark Hatfield, who was a state representative when he co-sponsored the successful 1953 Civil Rights Bill advocated by the Rutherfords and the NAACP: "*He was gentle as a dove for peace, fierce as a warrior for justice.....he was made of steel.*" On December 4, 2000, *The Oregonian* published a feature on Oregon's 150 most influential people in the years 1850 to 2000. The list included Otto Rutherford and a photograph of Otto and Verdell Rutherford. In 1998, Senator Hatfield visited Otto and Verdell at the subject property, and said that he had come to thank them personally for all of their civil rights work.

In later years, Portland grew to recognize the importance of the city's, and Oregon's, African American history, and began to rectify its foundation of Black exclusion laws and other racist practices. As a result, Otto and Verdell Rutherford finally began to see broader recognition of their accomplishments. A resolution recognizing those accomplishments was presented in the Oregon Legislature in the spring of 2001. Otto and Verdell Rutherford instilled in their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren the importance of education, advocacy for civil rights and equal opportunity, and the importance of their family heritage. Verdell Rutherford assembled immense photo albums for each of her children and grandchildren that included family photographs, family trees, and other documents.

Otto and Verdell Rutherford's three children graduated from Jefferson High School. Their son William remains in Portland, is an accomplished artist, and has two daughters. Their son Earle worked for the US Post Office; he and his wife had two sons and bought the adjacent house at 823 NE Shaver Street. Earle Rutherford drowned in an accident in 1974, at the age of 32. Their daughter Charlotte graduated from Portland State University in 1976; raising a son and a daughter, she attained a Juris Doctor degree in 1983 from Howard University and an L.L.M. degree in 1985 from Georgetown University. She worked for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund until 1992 when she returned to Portland following her father's stroke. She retired as an Administrative Law judge for the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.

Otto and Verdell Rutherford lived to celebrate the attainment of the family's first Ph.D. degree; in June 2001, Al-Yasha Williams (daughter of Charlotte Rutherford), received her doctorate degree from Stanford University. Later a professor at Hunter College and Long Island University in New York City, and elsewhere, she was hired as a professor at Spelman College in Atlanta in the Fall of 2001 following her graduation.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE ALBINA NEIGHBORHOOD

The subject property is sited in the southern portion of the King Neighborhood located in northeast Portland, Oregon, and annexed to the upper portion of the original city of Albina in 1889. Settled in three separate parts, Albina is generally categorized in terms of lower, central, or upper. Lower Albina refers to the area from the Willamette River to Mississippi Avenue. Central Albina follows Mississippi Avenue, Russell Street, and Williams Avenue. Upper Albina consists of the area north of the intersection of Russell Street and N. Williams Avenue, up to Union Avenue/Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. In 1889, Albina expanded its city boundaries north to Killingsworth Street and east to NE 24th Avenue.

George Smith and Timothy Crimmins were among the early pioneers who purchased land or settled in the King area. Both of these men used Military Bounty land warrants to acquire their land holdings in 1866. Neither one owned it for very long. Smith and his wife Elizabeth sold their land six months after they bought it to H.F. Bloch and A.P. Dennison. Crimmins sold his land six years after he bought it. The southern half of the King Neighborhood was a Donation Land Claim of James McKeown, who was born in Ireland and bought the land in 1854.

Platting began in 1873 in the King Neighborhood. The Piedmont Subdivision, Portland's first streetcar suburb, and now the upper NW corner of the King Neighborhood, was platted with home building sites in 1889. The Lincoln Park Annex, where the subject property is located, was recorded in 1891. NE Shaver Street was named Cedar Street in the original plat; when Portland, Albina, and East Portland consolidated in 1891, there

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were nine Cedar Streets in the newly enlarged city of Portland. The Shaver Street name was extended from the Irvington Addition to the east. These areas were accessible by the then-new Portland-Vancouver Railroad streetcar line along Union Avenue, now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. By 1912, 25 additions had been platted in the neighborhood. Residential development in the King Neighborhood followed the extension of gas, electric, and streetcar lines. The disastrous Portland Fire of 1889 also spurred extensive new development.

The King Neighborhood was known as "Highland" in its early days, because of its location on a tall ridge running between the Columbia and Willamette rivers. Many larger homes (still extant) were built in the Piedmont Subdivision. More modest housing was also built, including a row of five nearly identical cottages built in 1912 by Gus Wahlgren on NE Mason Street between 9th and 10th Avenues in the Lincoln Park Annex.

Settlement: 1872-1880

Platted in 1872, the original town site of Albina developed along the eastern banks of the Willamette River. It was located on a donation land claim originally owned by J.L. Loring and Joseph Delay, pioneers who took advantage of the economic opportunity afforded by the Donation Land Act of 1850. Loring and Delay eventually sold their shares to William W. Page who, in turn, sold it to Edwin Russell and George H. Williams, former senator, U.S. Attorney General, and future mayor of Portland. The town was named after Page's wife and daughter, both of whom were named Albina. NE Russell Street and N. Williams Avenue still bear the names of the community's early pioneers.

In 1874, James Montgomery and William Reid took over the donation land claim, which, despite business risks, was still essentially a pastoral wilderness. They began developing residential sites, a move that met with success. Montgomery and Reid were also able to complete the construction of Russell's revenue cutter. It was the first United States government vessel built in Oregon.

The 1889 fire in Portland influenced the real estate market, causing sales in Albina to rise dramatically. It had already grown from a town of 143 people in 1880 to one with a population of nearly 3,000 by the time of its incorporation in 1887.

Consolidation: 1880-1891

The primary reason for Albina's rapid growth in the 1880s was the advent of the railways to the area. It was chosen to become the western terminus of a line operated by the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company (ORNC) in 1882. The arrival of the railroads caused a flurry of industrial, commercial, and residential growth in Albina. In 1883, William S. Ladd capitalized on the increased foreign trade in wheat and expanded his small Albina Flour Mills into the seven-story Portland Flouring Mills, which soon became the largest milling operation in the Pacific Northwest.⁴ Between the ORNC and Ladd's mill, two miles of Albina's waterfront were devoted to large corporate businesses. Until the time of its incorporation in 1887, Albina's growth as a community would be largely controlled by private business interests with headquarters on the west side of the river.

The city of Albina was already busily creating the social infrastructure to support its potential. Developers' attention had been further focused on the east side with the opening of the Morrison Bridge in 1887, and subsequently the Steel Bridge in 1889, both of which connected the east and west sides of the river. In 1889, the first electric streetcar in Portland began operation in Albina and soon became the dominant mode of transportation for the entire east side. The street railways produced an accelerated pace of growth for the east side, especially in Albina. Social institutions such as schools and churches appeared in the growing town, as did residences.

The city of Albina also expanded physically. West side interests and local realtors pressured the state legislature to allow Albina to annex territory that was nine times greater than its original size at incorporation.

⁴ Portland Bureau of Planning, *History of the Albina Plan Area* (Portland, OR, 1990).

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Upon annexation, Albina covered more land than incorporated East and West Portland combined. The city of Albina consisted of 13.5 square miles with a population density of 450 per square mile.⁵

With so much land at stake, Albina's consolidation with Portland became a focal topic for policy makers of both cities. Consolidation made sense for Albina, because it would relieve the city of the burden of providing municipal services with funds it did not have. Consolidation, promoted by Portland businessmen, was also supported by Albina's citizens who, lacking funds for municipal services, had their own economic interests at heart. In 1891, consolidation was approved, and citizens of Portland were faced with the formidable task of taking on the financial obligations of the former city of Albina. By 1900, with the addition of Albina, Portland's population had increased by 50 percent and its geographic area by 40 percent.⁶

Ethnic Migration and Settlement in Albina: 1880-1920s and Later

Beginning in the 1880s and into the teens, Albina continued to absorb a growing number of immigrants relative to the rest of the city. Predominantly from Eastern Europe, immigrants from Italy, Greece, Hungary, Poland, and Russia joined established immigrants from Germany and Ireland, as well as a Scandinavian community that had settled along the corridor of NE 7th Avenue. This concentration of immigrants would remain, even as Portland experienced a phenomenal growth rate from 1905 to 1912 that diluted its foreign-born population. The Albina area would come to serve as a gateway for immigrants newly arriving in Portland.

The early settlers in the King Neighborhood were mostly primarily Caucasian, middle and upper-class, with many recent immigrants from Russia, Germany, Sweden, and Poland. The sections of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (then Union Avenue) and 7th Avenue from Shaver to Fremont Street had so many immigrants from Russia that it was called "Little Russia", although the immigrants were "Volga Germans," who had immigrated to Russia and lived along the Volga River in Russia before coming to the United States. The Volga Germans owned businesses on Union Avenue, including the Geist Shoe and Department Store, Kepp Brothers Meat and Groceries, and Weimer's Hardware and Furniture Store.

The many immigrants in the King Neighborhood could be seen in its early churches. For example, St. Nicholas Orthodox Church at 3605 NE Mallory Avenue (now Greater St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church) had a Russian Congregation, as evident in its distinctive "onion dome." The German Congregational Zion Church (now Mt. Zion Baptist Church) at 831 NE Fremont Street had German members. The Allen Temple CME Church was originally the Second German Congregation Church, who built it in 1932 at NE 8th and Skidmore. By the end of World War II, the German/Russian community had largely dispersed; their church buildings were gradually acquired by the African American congregations that continue to use them to this day.

African American Settlement

The King Neighborhood is named after the Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, which opened in 1913 as Highland School and was renamed for Dr. King in 1968. The neighborhood boundaries are roughly NE Rodney Avenue (west), NE 10th Avenue (east), NE Fremont Street (south), and NE Ainsworth Street (north.)

Beginning in 1919, the Portland Realty Board adopted a policy restricting the sale of properties to "Negros and Orientals" to Albina. Most African Americans were forced to find housing in the area bounded by the Willamette River to the west, Union Avenue to the east, and Fremont Street to the north. The restrictive policy held until the 1950s, with the passage of Oregon's Civil Rights Bill in 1953.

Early African American residency in the vicinity of the subject property was extremely limited. The Bosco-Milligan Foundation's 1998 in-depth documentation of extant buildings associated with Portland's African American community shows: a musician and hotelman, D'Oracie Oliver, next door at 823 NE Shaver Street for one year, in 1918, along with William and Mamie Warren, a Portland Hotel captain who became a railroad chef. African American attorney Eugene Minor, who came to Portland as a youth in 1896, lived two blocks

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

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away at 3926 NE 8th Avenue from 1918-1924; he was president of the NAACP in 1937. Mrs. Mattie Harris, referred to as a "pioneer citizen of Portland" in a 1929 *Advocate* newspaper issue, resided two blocks away at 3933 NE 8th Avenue for one year in 1921. Portland Hotel waiter Almus Morrow, brother of *Advocate* editor Beatrice Cannady, lived at 3961 NE 8th Avenue with his wife Lillian from 1921-1923. Benjamin Randolph, a railroad porter and his wife Clarisse, who date in Portland from at least 1918, were Bethel AME Church members and also lived two blocks away at 4034 NE 7th Avenue from 1921 into the 1950s.

The ethnic context of the neighborhood gradually changed with the influx of more African Americans, especially during World War II, which brought a substantially greater diversity of people to Portland to work in the shipyards. The African American population rapidly grew from 2,000 to more than 22,000. The flooding of the shipyards housing community of Vanport in 1948 forced its residents to move to other areas.

African Americans were forced into the Albina neighborhoods, including King. Between 1940 and 1950, Albina's African American population grew from 1,600 to 4,500. The construction of the Memorial Coliseum in the 1950s, Interstate 5 in the 1960s, and the Emanuel Hospital Urban Renewal Project of the early 1970s also forced the relocation of many of those neighborhoods' African American families from Lower Albina.

In 1962, the city completed the Central Albina Plan Study within the boundaries of NE Killingsworth to the north, the Banfield Freeway to the south, N Interstate to the west, and NE 16th Avenue to the east. The plan concluded that the area was in an advanced state of urban blight. Neighborhood residents strongly objected to plans for massive clearance. However, the Eliot Neighborhood lost half of its residents and 1,379 of its houses to public programs between 1958 and 1972.⁷ The thriving African American commercial district on N Williams Avenue was largely destroyed, along with the equity built up in property ownership, as people were forced to start over in other locations; many businesses were forced to close.

The King Neighborhood joined in the Federal Model Cities program in 1967, which led to the creation of a land use and improvements plan. Unfortunately, the neighborhood plans were never adopted by the city, given the reduction of federal funding. However, the resulting core of neighborhood leadership proved to be a powerful force for achieving positive outcomes for the area. In 1980, 20,000 African Americans lived in Albina, making up 30% of its population. By 2010, with the growing desirability of close-in housing and subsequent gentrification, none of the Albina census tracts have a majority African American population any longer.

Changes in Commercial and Residential Development: 1920s-1970s

By the 1920s Union Avenue was nearly fully built out, lined with commercial businesses in frame buildings interspersed with dwellings. The 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, the earliest that covers the neighborhood east of NE 6th Avenue, shows the Lincoln Park Annex as nearly fully built as well, with single-family dwellings. A number of extant homes on NE Prescott Street and 7th Avenue are Craftsman bungalows dating from 1902 to 1904. Others on NE Prescott, Skidmore Street, and 7th Avenue were constructed between 1911 and 1923. On NE 6th Avenue north of Beech, a dwelling housed a maternity hospital; a Mennonite Church was located on NE 6th Avenue just north of the NE Fremont Street; a former Congregational Church became Mt. Sinai Community Baptist Church in 1952, at NE 6th Avenue and Prescott Street, and dates from 1905. In the early 2000s the church property was sold and is now a community theater venue.

Future changes in land use drastically altered the environment of the Albina district. For the business sector, the changes in land use patterns were tied to the growing popularity of cars as America's favorite means of transportation. As more and more clients and business customers arrived by car, building orientation and land use patterns were adjusted to suit their needs. Commercial districts that had flourished in the time of streetcars now struggled to compete with the retail opportunities offered by the automobile. Regional shopping malls further drained commercial traffic from businesses located along the old streetcar lines. Union Avenue's commercial economy went into decline in the 1940s when the auto dealerships decided to relocate to the up-and-coming Interstate Avenue, a street primed for the automobile. Union Avenue had been

⁷ Bosco-Milligan Foundation, op. cit.

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widened in 1929, resulting in the removal of some buildings, and removal of facades from others. Union Avenue continued to serve neighborhood residents with a variety of local businesses that opened and closed, and early residences on Union Avenue gradually fell to commercial development or vacant lots. Increased through-traffic increased congestion and accidents.

In 1967, two days of racial violence resulted in vandalism on Union Avenue between NE Fremont and NE Beech Streets, making the economic viability of the Avenue even grimmer. In 1969, Portland's chapter of the Black Panther Party opened its headquarters at 3819 NE Union (no longer extant). Following years of public discussion of improvement plans, in 1973 the city adopted the Union Avenue Redevelopment Plan. The primary result was the construction of median strips; on-street parking was removed, which drastically impacted local business. The median strips came to be seen as a major barrier dividing the neighborhoods, and a symbol of all that was wrong with public "solutions" to the area's problems. In 1981, the "Possum Incident" – the dumping of dead opossums by several police officers at the Burger Barn Restaurant located at 3962 NE Martin Luther King Blvd (extant but endangered by redevelopment), outraged the African American community.

Portland's major growth in population and development in the 1980s arrived in force in Albina in the 1990s. More plans for Martin Luther King Blvd. finally resulted in the restoration of some on-street parking, and the reduction of the median strips. Several affordable housing projects were constructed at NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Prescott Street, in modern structures larger in scale than nearby development. As the 1990s closed and the new century opened, gentrification and displacement due to rising property values has remained a major concern, especially for long-time residents and business owners. At present, new construction along Martin Luther King Blvd. has grown even more with the post-recession acceleration in new development.

Returned

RUTHERFORD HOUSE OWNERSHIP HISTORY

The William H. Rutherford House, located at 833 NE Shaver Street, is a Craftsman bungalow residence with classical details added in the 1930s. It was constructed ca 1905; no city building records exist to document the exact date of construction, but property ownership records (family-owned abstract for property and Multnomah County tax records) document that William and Etta Gwynn acquired both Lots 9 and 10 in July 1905; the lots were divided north to south by October. The west half of Lots 9 and 10 were sold to Joseph Tremblay. According to Portland city directories, he lived at 823 NE Shaver from 1906 to 1909. William Gwynn and Joseph Tremblay were both building contractors and the two Shaver Street houses were identical prior to later alterations. Before moving to 823 NE Shaver, Tremblay had resided at 820 NE 29th Avenue; that house, and the adjacent house at 812 NE 29th Avenue, are nearly identical to the Shaver Street house (minus the dormers and with modified entry roofs).

In 1910, Tremblay moved onto NE Klickitat in the Irvington Neighborhood, where he remained until 1917. Gwynn and his wife Etta moved to San Francisco by 1907; Etta Gwynn died there in 1908 at the age of 34, and William Gwynn moved to Eureka, California, in 1909. That same year, Gwynn sold the subject property to Sophia Racette. According to Portland city directories, George Racette, a concrete worker, lived at the subject property from 1910 - 1914. In 1913, Sophia Racette married William Fisher, a bridge builder/ironworker who lived at the subject property by 1912. In 1909, George Racette and William Fisher both resided at 3964 NE 8th Avenue. Sophia and William Fisher lived at the subject property in 1915-16. They then disappeared from city directories. In 1922, Sophia Fisher conveyed the property to Delia Racette, widow of George, from whom it was acquired by William H. and Lottie Rutherford in 1923. It has remained in the Rutherford family from 1923 to the present.

CONCLUSION

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

The Rutherford House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local and state levels under Criterion A, Social History, for its place in the history of the Civil Rights Movement in Portland and Oregon, by virtue of its ownership by civil rights activists Otto and Verdell Rutherford. It is additionally important for its location in the Albina district, which was one of only a handful of places where the senior William H. Rutherford could buy a residence, due to exclusionary practices aimed at “Negros and Orientals” in Portland, which were in place until 1953, the date of the passage of Oregon’s Civil Rights Bill. It is also significant under Criterion B, Ethnic Heritage, at the local level, for its association with William H. Rutherford, an early African American business owner in Portland, who lived there from 1923 until his death in 1955. It is significant under Criterion B, Ethnic Heritage, at the state level, for its association with Rutherford’s son and daughter-in-law, Otto B. and Verdell Rutherford. The younger Rutherfords lived in the house from 1936 until 1999, when they moved to senior care facilities. Otto and Verdell Rutherford were activists in the Civil Rights Movement from the 1930s through the 1970s. They were among those who drafted Oregon’s Civil Rights Bill and actively pursued its passage in 18 legislative sessions, until its adoption in 1953. The Rutherfords were also active in the NAACP, serving in key positions and founding and running the NAACP credit union from the house at 833 NE Shaver Street. In later years, they played key roles in preserving and maintaining Portland’s African American history. The residence at 833 NE Shaver Street retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance and associations under Criteria A and B.

Returned

9. Major Bibliographical References

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

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

The Advocate newspaper; Portland, Oregon 1923-1933.

Bosco-Milligan Foundation. *Cornerstones of Community: The Buildings of Portland's African American History*. Portland, Oregon: Bosco-Milligan Foundation, 1998.

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National Park Service. *African American Historic Places*. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1994.

Oral interviews; Otto Rutherford (1995-2000); Vernell Burdine Rutherford (1995-2001); Donald Rutherford (2000-2001); Vernell Rutherford Watson (1997-2001)

The Oregonian, 9 September, 1992; 6 April, 1999; 21 April, 1999; 27 December, 1999; 18 August, 2000; 4 December, 2000.

The Oregonian. The Oregon Story – 1850-2000. Portland, Oregon: The Oregonian, 2000.

Oregon Public Broadcasting. *Local Color*, video: Portland, Oregon, 1990.

Polk's Portland City Directory. Portland, Oregon: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc. 1897-1976.

Portland Buildings Bureau. Building permit records.

Portland Bureau of Planning. *Albina Community Plan: Background Report, Vol. 1: The Albina Community*. Portland, Oregon: Bureau of Planning, Feb. 1991.

Portland Historical Context Statement. Portland, Oregon: Bureau of Planning. September 1992.

Portland Maps, <http://www.portlandmaps.com/>, accessed July 2014.

Portland Observer, 6 March, 1975; 5 October, 1978; 11 August, 1982; 20 November, 1996.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Vols. 1-6. 1897-1955.

Snyder, Eugene. *Portland Names and Neighborhoods: Their Historic Origins*. Portland, Oregon: Binford & Mort, 1979.

Staepli, Alfred. *Preservation Options for Portland Neighborhoods*. 15 Dec. 1975.

Rutherford and Burdine family papers and memorabilia, were in the possession of Verdell Burdine Rutherford and Charlotte Rutherford. Now the Verdell Burdine Rutherford Collection at Portland State University's library.

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

Statesville Record & Landmark (Statesville, N.C.) 31 July, 1970.

U.S. Census, 1920, 1980, 2000, 2010.

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository(ies): _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

Returned

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>45.552239</u>	<u>-122.656852</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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

NW 1/2 SW 1/4 Section 23, Township 1 North, Range 1 East of the Willamette Meridian, in Multnomah County, Oregon and is legally described as the eastern on-half of Lots 9 and 10, Block 19, Lincoln Park Annex.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The 50 x 100 foot Portland City tax lot occupied by the Rutherford House (Tax Lot 15300), is the full extent of the property associated with the historic context.

Returned

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Galbraith, Executive Director date July 23, 2014
organization Bosco-Milligan Foundation telephone 503-231-7264
street & number 701 SE Grand Avenue email cathyg@visitahc.org
city or town Portland state Oregon zip code 97214

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Regional Location Map**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: Rutherford House
City or Vicinity: Portland
County: Multnomah **State:** Oregon
Photographer: 2000 – Cathy Galbraith; 2014 – David Greene
Date Photographed: November 2000; August 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

2000 Photos:

- Photo 1 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0001
Main (south) façade and portion of west elevation
- Photo 2 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0002
Main (south) façade entry
- Photo 3 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0003
East elevation
- Photo 4 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0004
North elevation, detail of boxed eaves
- Photo 5 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0005
Main (south) elevation – entry porch and windows
- Photo 6 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0006
Interior – living room windows, looking east
- Photo 7 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0007
Living room fireplace, looking east
- Photo 8 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0009
Dining room – entry to kitchen, wainscot, cabinet, looking north
- Photo 9 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0010
Dining room, wainscot, door to upstairs, looking north
- Photo 10 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0011
Second floor bedroom (typical)
- Photo 11 of 15:** OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0012
Basement, 1929 door to garage

Rutherford House
Name of Property

Multnomah, Oregon
County and State

Photo 12 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0013
Basement – garage wall, ceiling

2014 Photos:

Photo 13 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0014
South (front) and west elevations, 2014

Photo 14 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0015
East and north (rear) elevations, 2014

Photo 15 of 15: OR_MultnomahCounty_RutherfordHouse_0015
South (front) and east elevations, 2014

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 100 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.

Returned

**Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR**

List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.

Figure 1: General Vicinity Map

Figure 2: Local Location Map

Figure 3: Tax Lot Map

Figure 4: Site Plan

Figure 5: First Floor Plan

Figure 6: Second Floor Plan

Figure 7: Basement Plan

Figure 8: William H. Rutherford Family House ca 1922

Figure 9: William H. and Lottie Rutherford, 1898

Figure 10: Edward W. and William H. Rutherford, Rutherford Brothers Barbers, 1912

Figure 11: William Jr., Alan, Otto and Donald Rutherford, ca 1919

Figure 12: Burdine Family, 1919

Figure 13: NAACP Delegation, 1953

Figure 14: Otto and Verdell Burdine Rutherford, 1989

Figure 15: Otto and Verdell Rutherford, 2006

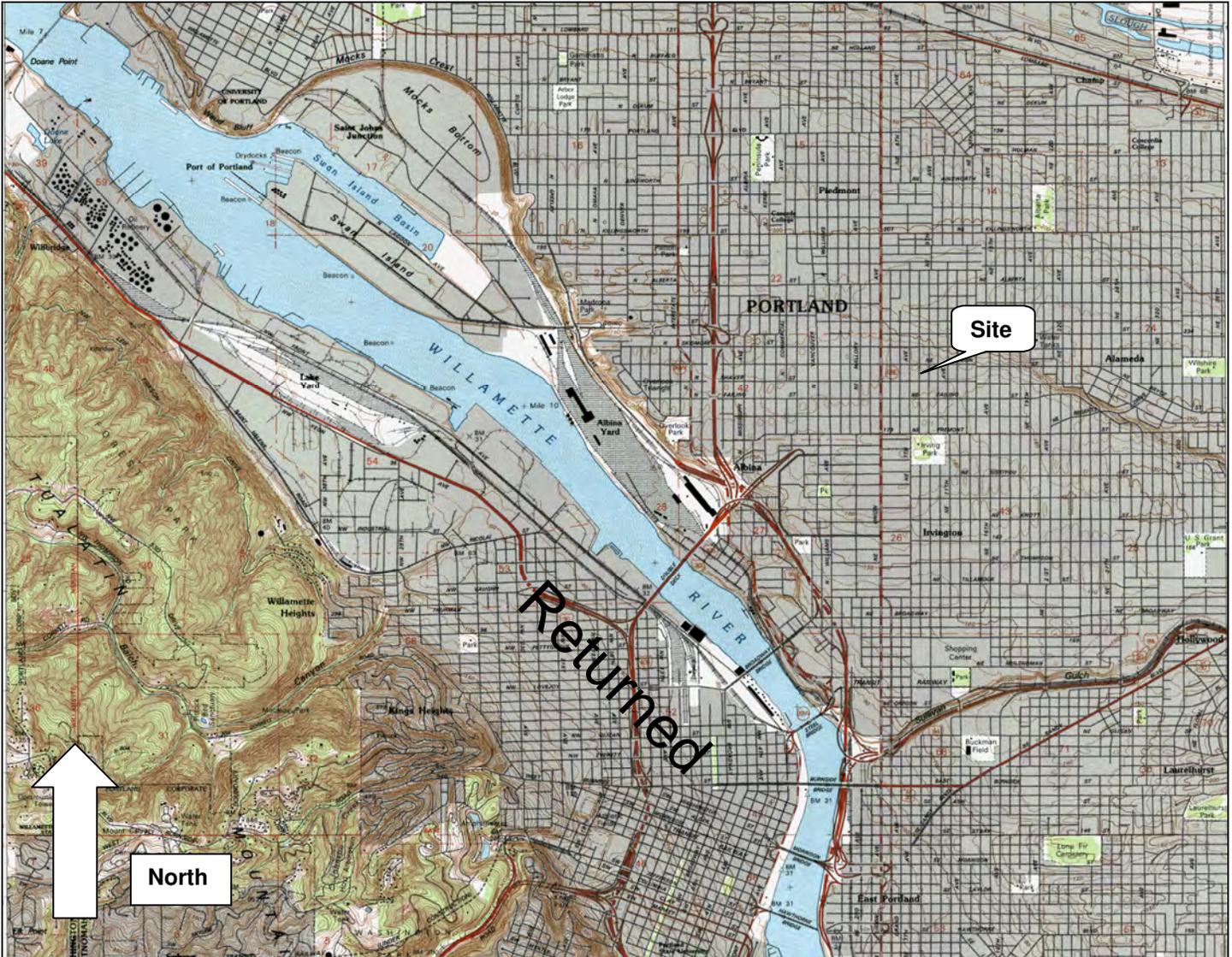
Figure 16: Senator Mark Hatfield, Otto and Verdell Rutherford, 1998

Photo taken by Cathy Galbraith at subject property

Returned

Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 1: Regional Vicinity Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852

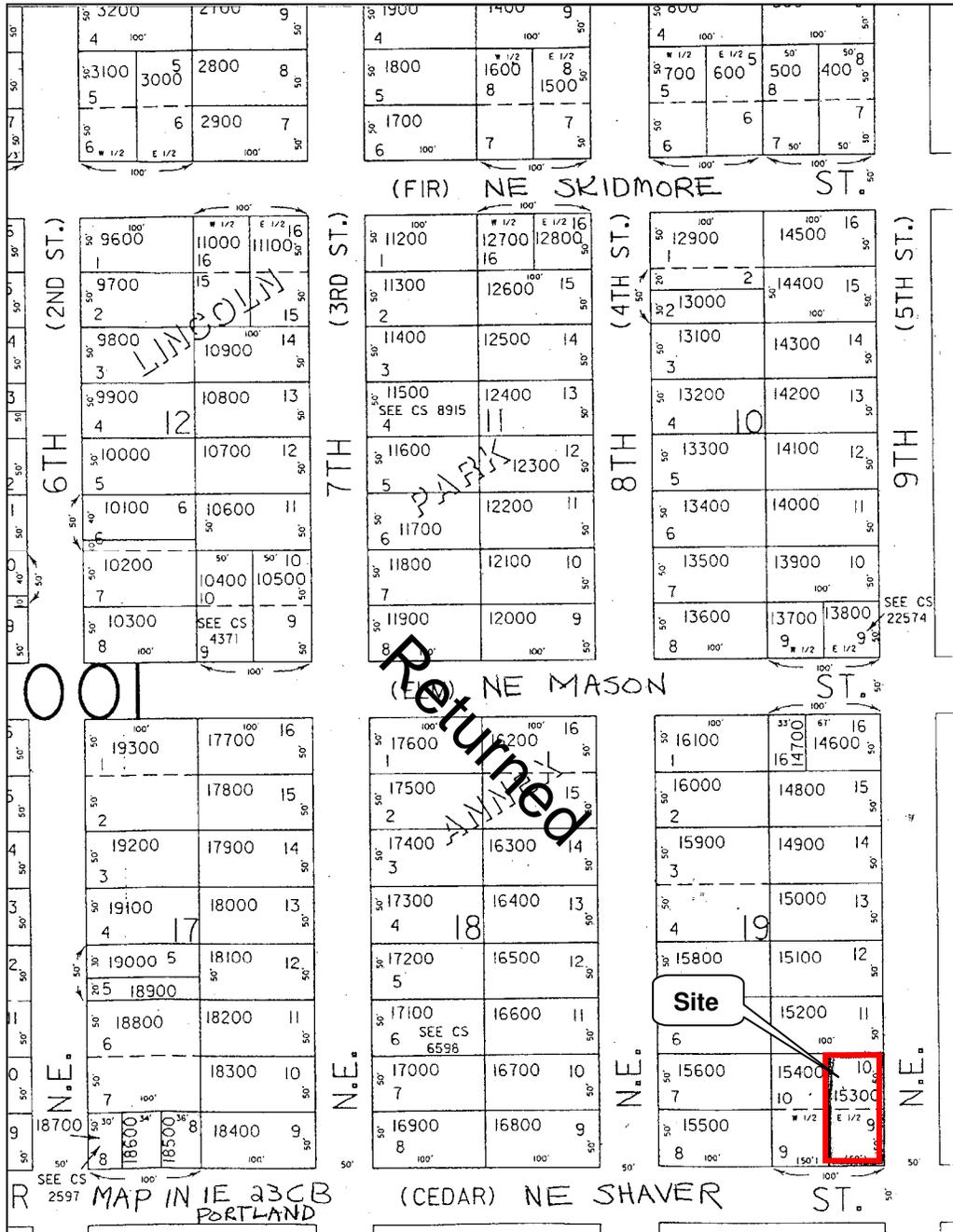


**Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR**

Figure 2: Local Location Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852

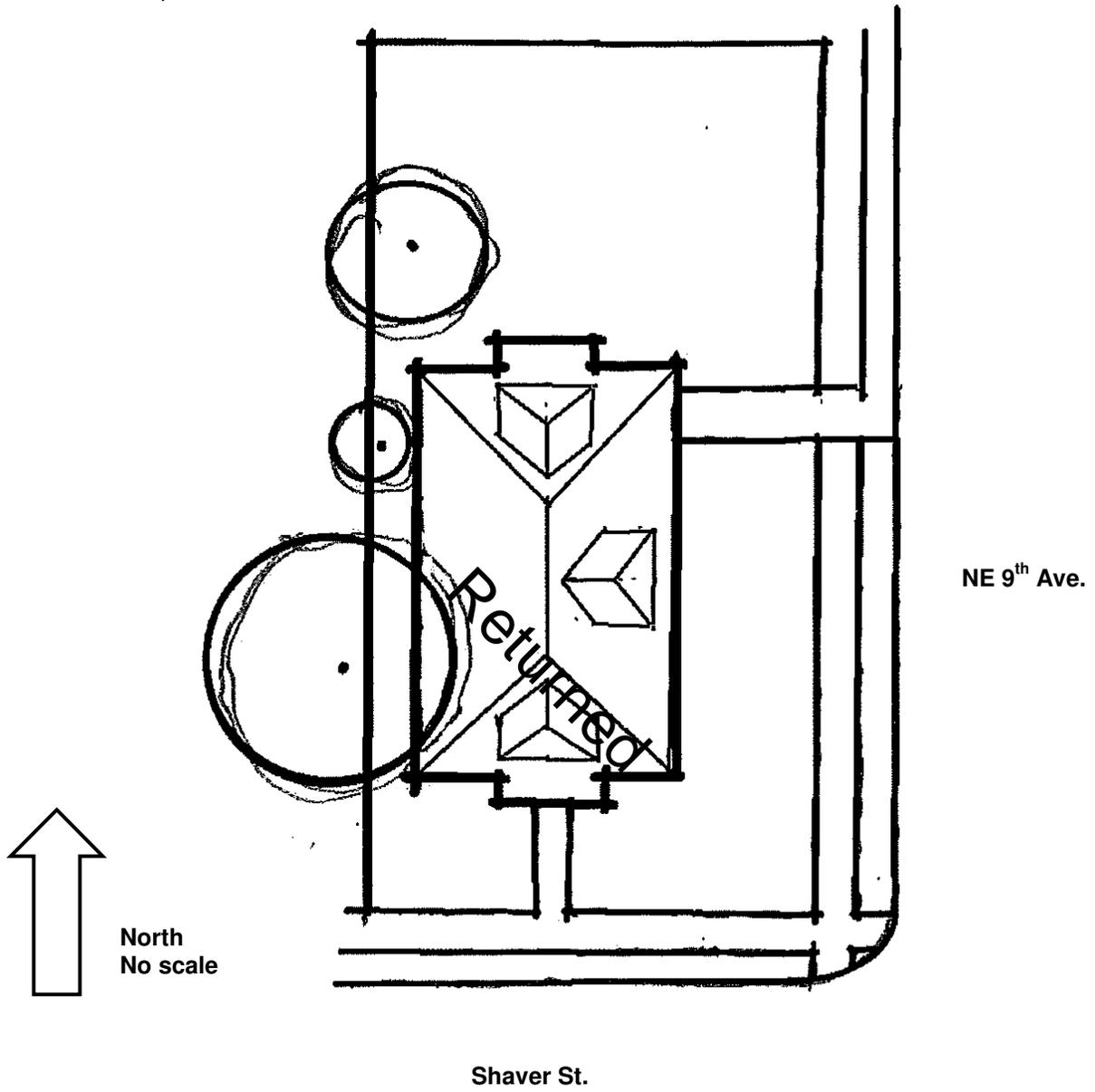


Figure 3: Tax Lot Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.552239 / -122.656852



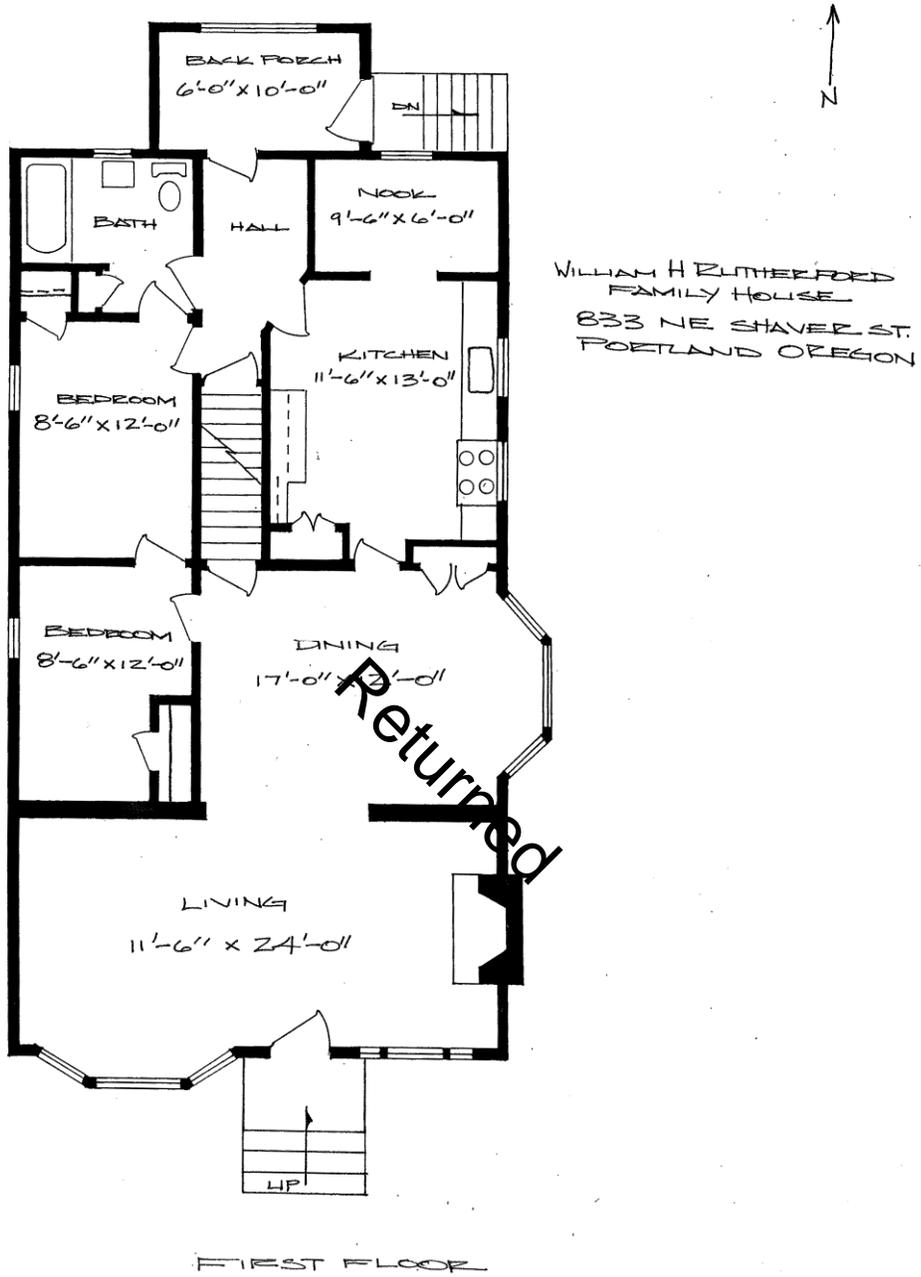
Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 4: Site Plan



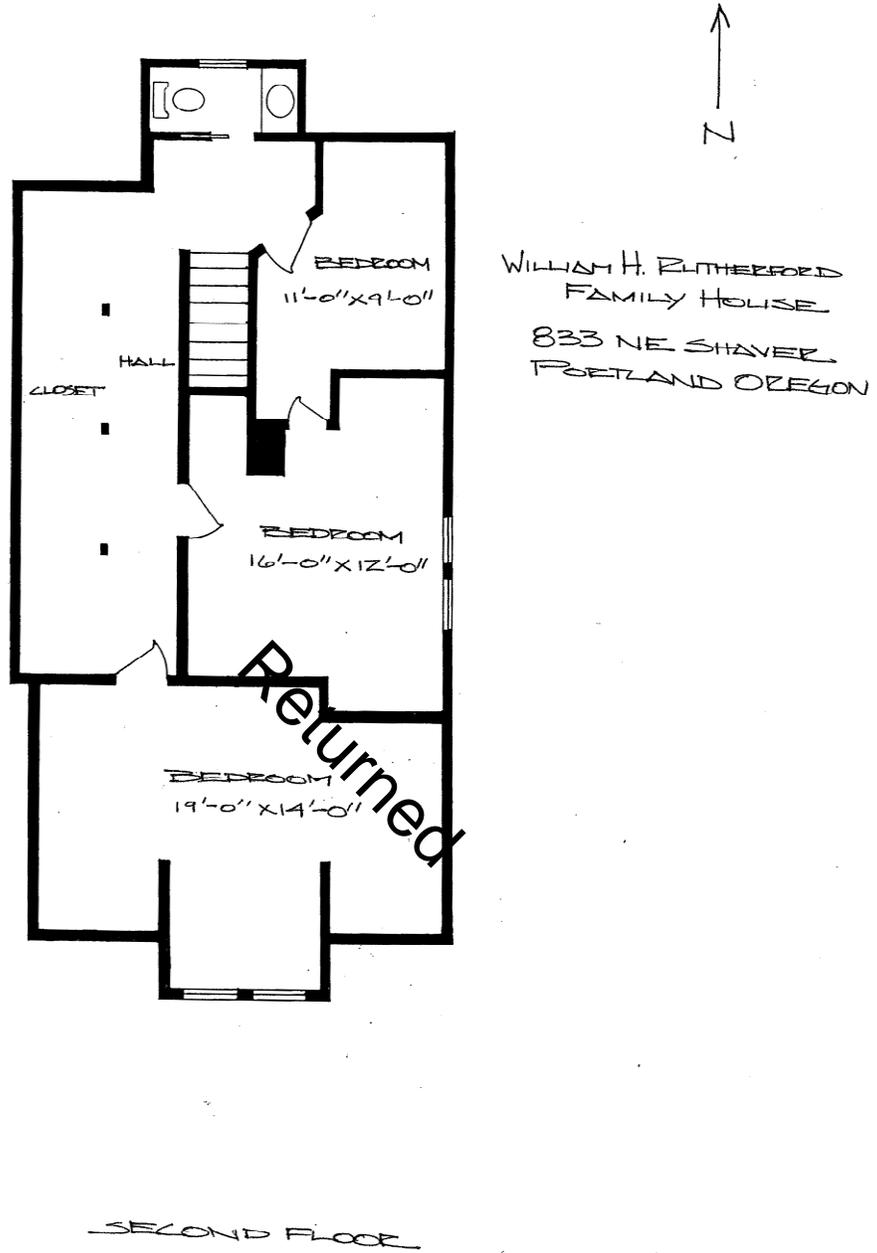
Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 5: First Floor Plan



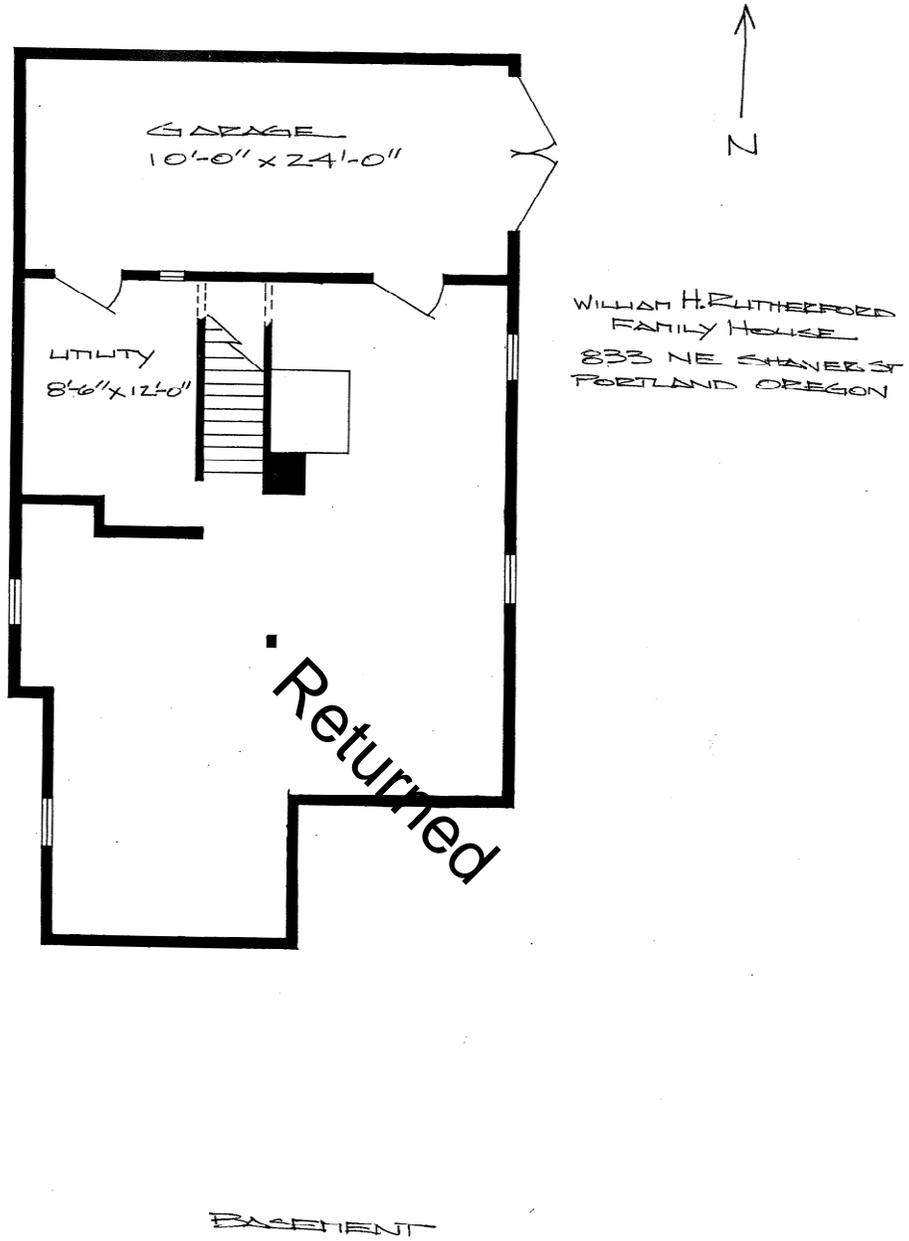
Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 6: Second Floor Plan



Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 7: Basement Plan



**Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR**

Figure 8: William H. Rutherford House, 833 NE Shaver Street, ca 1922



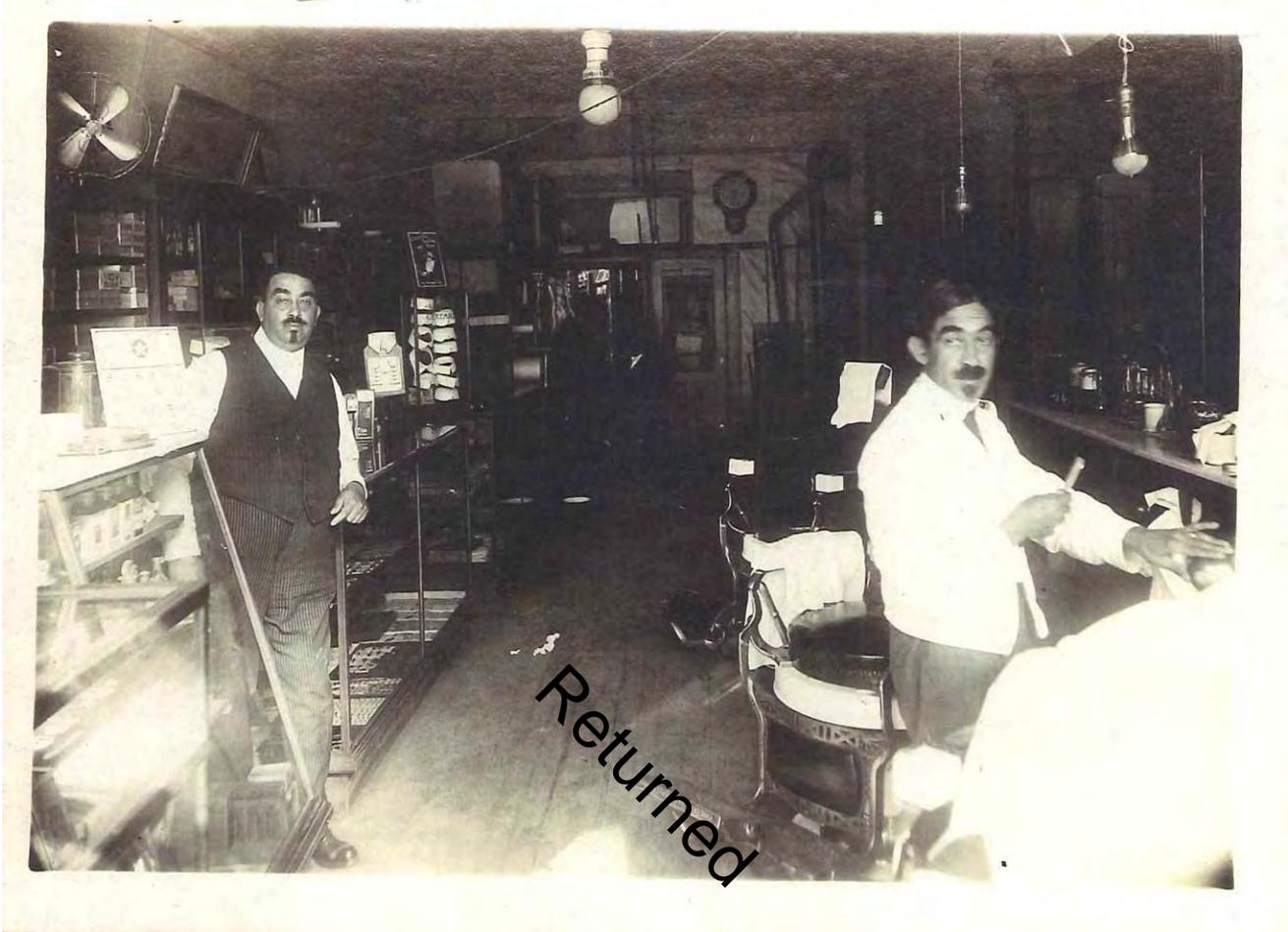
Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 9: William H. and Lottie Rutherford, 1898



Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR

Figure 10: Edward W. & William H. Rutherford, Rutherford Brothers Barbers, 1912



**Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR**

Figure 11: William Jr., Alan, Otto and Donald Rutherford, ca 1919

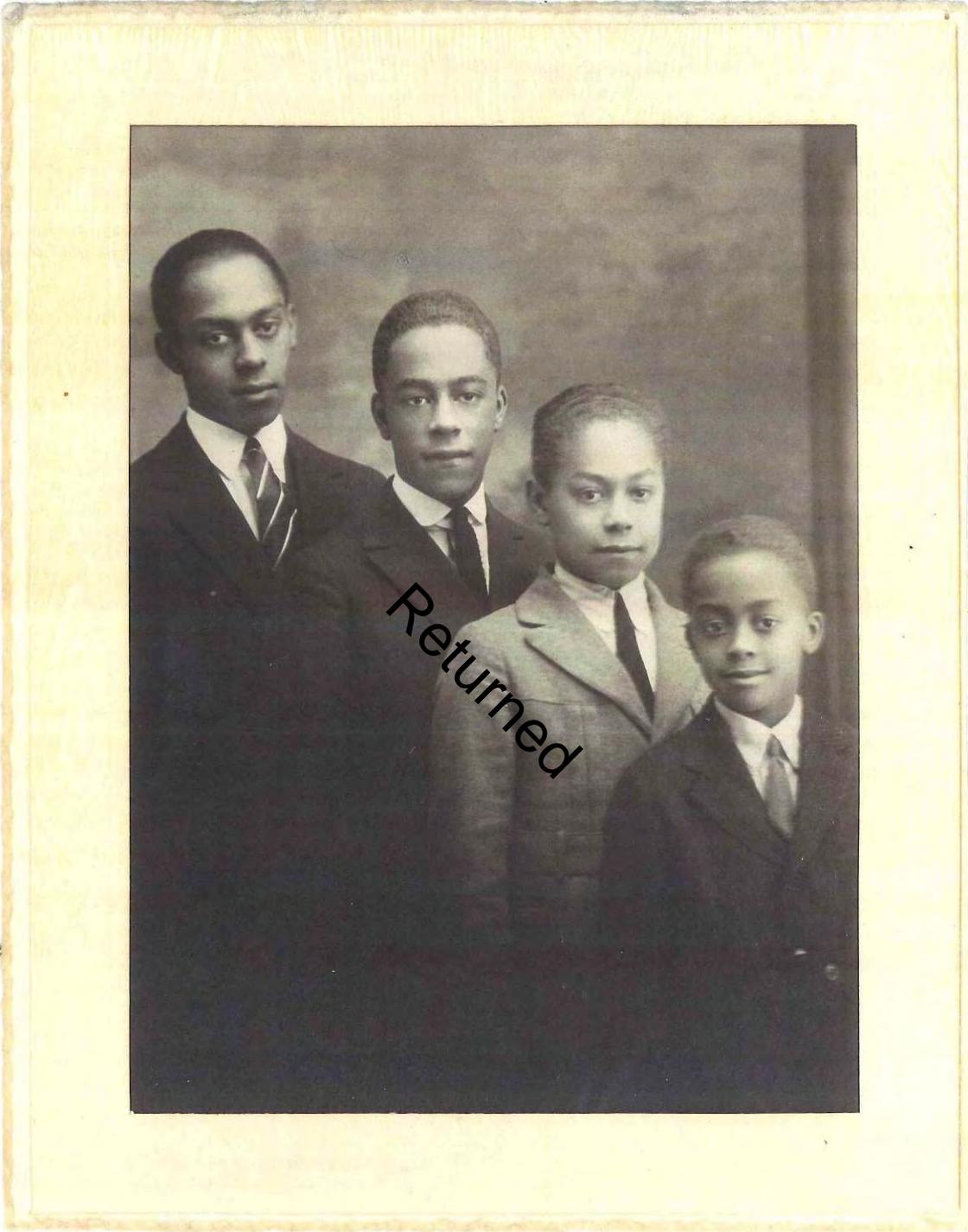


Figure 12: Burdine family, 1919



Figure 13: NAACP Delegation thanking the sponsors of the Civil Rights Bill, April 13, 1953



NAACP Delegation thanking the sponsors of the civil rights bill.

Left to right seated: Senator Philip Hitchcock, Rep. Mark O. Hatfield.

Left to right standing: Edgar Williams, Marie Smith, Ulysess Plummer, Rev. J. Harold Jones, Lorna Maples, Verdell Burdine Rutherford and Otto Rutherford.

Figure 14: Otto and Verdell Burdine Rutherford, 1989



Figure 15: Otto and Verdell Rutherford in *The Oregonian's* "One Hundred and Fifty Years," December 4, 2000

Bethenia Owens-Adair: A wagon-train child raised near Astoria, she was married at 14, left an abusive husband, taught herself to read and write, fought her way into medical school and became one of the first women to practice medicine on the frontier.

Joel Palmer: He pioneered almost everything he touched, from writing the guide to the Oregon Trail to fighting for Indian rights. He thought concentrating Native Oregonians on reservations was their best hope for survival.

Bud Parsons: Don't like the world of 150 channels and nothing on? Blame Bud. In 1948, the Astoria man cabled together a few homes and linked them to a community antenna atop the Astoria Hotel. One small step for Astoria; one giant leap for cable TV.

Linus Pauling: The founding father of molecular biology, a graduate of Oregon State University, remains the only person ever to receive two unshared Nobel prizes, one for chemistry in 1954 and the Peace Prize in 1962.

Sylvester Pennoyer: Ever wonder where Oregon got its independent streak? As governor, responding to an official query from President Cleveland, Pennoyer wired: "You attend to your business, and I'll attend to mine."

Portlandia: We've always had a weakness for the strong, silent type.

Michael Powell: Every great city is famous for something. Paris has the Eiffel Tower. New Delhi has the Red Fort. Portland has a bookstore.

Steve Prefontaine: "Pre" was sports star as cultural icon when Eugene was the running capital of the world. He's the only Oregonian to have two (bad) Hollywood movies made about him in the same year.

Jim Quinn: The president of Collins Pine led the first company in the United States to have a private forest certified for its commitment to ecosystem health.

Johnnie Ray: Elvis may have learned that wiggle from "The Prince of Wails." Johnny cried; women swooned.

Amanda Reed: In 1904, the wife of Simeon Reed left the bulk of her \$1.8 million estate to establish in Portland "an institution for the promotion of literature, science and art."

John Reed: Socially prominent Portlander Charles Jerome Reed had a restless son who wandered the world, journalist's pen in hand, in search of a revolution. He found at least three: the Mexican, the Russian and the women's.



OTTO RUTHERFORD

Mark Hatfield said that Otto Rutherford, shown here with his wife, Verdell, "was gentle as a dove for peace, fierce as a warrior for justice."

firms to start the Northwest Earth Institute and promote living simply.

Nan Russell: She was First Friend to the Columbia River Gorge.

Otto Rutherford: His dad was a room-service barber in the Portland Hotel, barrel of the color of his skin from working in the hotel's barbershop. In 1953, he led the 1953 legislative fight in Oregon to outlaw discrimination in hotels, motels and restaurants. He won.

John Scharff: He retired in 1971 after 36 years as founding manager of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. To wander Steens Mountain with Scharff was to hike high places with a giant.

August Scherneckau: Reminding us that much that is Oregon is fleeting, in 1876 Scherneckau founded a settlement — locals pronounced it Shaniko — that became a rip-snortin', bawdy-house-boasting, whiskey-toting wool capital of the West. Then, suddenly, it was gone.

Arlene Schnitzer: Armed with a shoot-from-the-lip wit, a keen eye and a philanthropic heart, she opened her first art gallery in Portland in 1961. Modern art was on the Oregon map at last.

Les Schwab: He opened a tire store in Prineville in 1952. Beef, and changing a flat, has often been free since.

Jack Shipley: The president of the Applegate Partnership in Southern Oregon charted the course for a new kind of community organizing with timber companies, ranchers and conservationists working together in the watershed they share.

child prodigy, she reluctantly moved with her husband to Portland in 1864 only to be reduced to selling toiletries door-to-door. She became the state's leading early historian and friend to many prominent pioneers.

Michael Vidor: Way ahead of the taste curve, Vidor created a series of Portland restaurants unlike any that had come before: L'Auberge, Genoa; The Wood Stove, Tanuki and Macheesmo Mouse.

Howard Vollum: The first logger to see the Silicon Forest, he co-founded Tektronix in 1946.

John Waldo: "There are educational uses in the mountains and the wilderness which might well justify a wise people in preserving and reserving them for such uses." The 19th-century chief justice of the Oregon Supreme Court helped secure the designation of Crater Lake as a national park.

Barbara Walker: Portland is an uneasy metropolis, guilty of the way it thrusts through the pristine wilderness, Walker outranks almost everyone with her work to nurture nature in the city.

Bill Walton: Two words: world champion.

Henry Wemme: Next time you get stuck in rush-hour traffic, blame the Portland tentmaker. In 1899, Wemme decided to try something new to speed up his day: He bought a horseless carriage.

Oswald West: Ever wondered why nobody owns the Oregon coast? In 1913, the guy brought all Oregon beaches into public ownership by declaring

**Rutherford House
Multnomah County, OR**

Figure 16: Senator Mark Hatfield, Otto and Verdell Rutherford, 1998 (Photo taken by Cathy Galbraith at subject property)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Rutherford House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Multnomah

DATE RECEIVED: 11/07/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/05/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/22/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/24/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001076

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT RETURN ___REJECT 1/6/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Return
REVIEWER W. J. [Signature]
TELEPHONE _____

DISCIPLINE [Signature]
DATE 1/6/15

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.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Comments
Evaluation/Return Sheet**

Property Name: Rutherford House
Property Location: Multnomah Co., Oregon
Reference Number: 14001076
Date of Return: 1/6/15

Nomination Summary

The Rutherford House is nominated under National Register Criteria A and B at the local and state level of significance for its association with Oregon's Civil Rights Movement and for its association with William H. Rutherford, an African-American business owner in Portland from 1907 to 1934 and for Otto and Verdell Rutherford for their activities on behalf of the NAACP and Civil Rights Movement. The period of significance is 1923-1965.

This nomination is being returned for substantive issues. The nomination attempts to cover several important themes in Portland's history—early 20th-century, African-American businesses, discriminatory practices in housing and employment opportunities, and civil rights activism leading to the passage of the Oregon Civil Rights Bill, however, it does not provide enough contextual detail to fully explain the significant contributions made by the Rutherfords in the African-American business community and/or in civil rights activities. The nomination also does not provide comparative analysis with other African-American business owners and active civil rights workers to understand their specific contributions and why their contributions rise to a state level of significance.

The nomination indicates much of the historic African-American business community is no longer extant. Was there a particular area within the city where these businesses were located, what if anything remains, and what was this business community's relationship with the Asian and Asian-American business community? On page 14, the text states that Otto and Verdell "were the leadership of the Portland branch of the NAACP at a crucial time." Further details are needed on the NAACP activities and the Rutherfords' accomplishments. Did their home also serve as the NAACP headquarters? What is the significance of organizing the NAACP Credit Union and was it always located in their home? What other extant buildings or churches are associated with civil rights activities and why is the house of Otto and Verdell Rutherford the historic resource that best exemplifies their civil rights work? Provide additional context on the Oregon Civil Rights Bill and the Rutherfords' contribution to "help write" it.

While some of the information regarding memberships in various organizations illustrates the community involvement of the Rutherfords, simply listing their memberships isn't sufficient to justify significance under social history. Provide further details on how their involvement promoted the welfare or life ways of these social groups and why it was important.

Please refer to the National Register Bulletin 32, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons* for additional guidance.

Lisa Deline, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
Lisa_Deline@nps.gov



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

Phone (503) 986-0690

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org

June 29, 2015

J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
USDOI National Park Service - Cultural Resources
1201 Eye Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005



RECEIVED 2280

JUL - 3 2015

**Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following historic property was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the recommendation of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation at their meeting on October 9, 2014. It was returned by the National Park Service for revisions on January 6, 2015 (a copy of the Return Sheet is attached for your convenience). We have now made the requested revisions. I hereby nominate the following historic property to the National Register:

RUTHERFORD, OTTO AND VERDELL, HOUSE
833 NE SHAVER ST
PORTLAND, MULTNOMAH COUNTY

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination listed above to the National Register of Historic Places.

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

Sincerely,

Christine Curran
Interim Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.





July 21, 2015

Dear Lisa,

I have not quite mastered this new print function, but here's an exhibit catalogue for the exhibit on Otto and Verdell Rutherford, for your files. If you want to see it in a larger format, it can be found at http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/swah_exhibit/7/.

Diana

11-2012

Rutherford Family Collection Celebration: Exhibit Catalogue

Charlotte Rutherford

Marti Clemmons

Meg Langford

Jeanne Roedel

Tasha Triplett

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/swah_exhibit

 Part of the [Cultural History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Rutherford, Charlotte; Clemmons, Marti; Langford, Meg; Roedel, Jeanne; Triplett, Tasha; Carpenter, Marc; and Schechter, Patricia, "Rutherford Family Collection Celebration: Exhibit Catalogue" (2012). "Say We Are Here" Exhibit. Book 7.
http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/swah_exhibit/7

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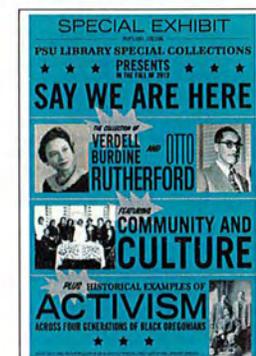
Authors

Charlotte Rutherford, Marti Clemmons, Meg Langford, Jeanne Roedel, Tasha Triplett, Marc Carpenter, and Patricia Schechter

CATALOGUE

for the exhibit drawn from the
Verdell A. Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection

Portland State University Library
Fall 2012



forward by
Charlotte B. Rutherford

selection and interpretation by
Marti Clemmons, Meg Langford, Jeanne Roedel,
Tasha Triplett & Marc Carpenter

with a note on the collection by
Patricia A. Schechter
Professor of History

FORWARD

"Say We Are Here" – How the Verdell A. Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Collection Came to be

My mom Verdell A. Burdine Rutherford saved things. She had a relatively big house and was well organized, so she was able to save a lot of things and still not have just a path through her house. During the almost 65 years that she lived in the same house with my dad (which, by the way, was the house my dad had been raised in and where I was raised with my two brothers) she saved nearly every Black community newspaper that came and went during that time as well as clippings from the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal* about subjects, particularly those about African Americans, that she thought were important and that her children should know about.

She also saved those newspapers and things that belonged to my dad's parents that pre-dated her move into the house in 1936. My dad's family is a pioneering Oregon Black family. My grandfather came to Oregon in 1895. My dad was born in 1911 and they moved into the house in 1922. There were newspapers dating back to 1919 and photographs that were taken even earlier among my grandparents' things that my mom also saved.

Over the years, mom allowed some of her and my dad's photographs and newspapers to be used in various displays. In addition to loaning her articles to others, she made her own displays. She organized a panorama of photographs and articles about the history of Bethel A.M.E. Church for its new location after the church was displaced by the Memorial Coliseum around 1960. Also, she displayed photographs and articles about the local NAACP Branch when its national convention was held in Portland in 1978. Using mom's newspapers and dad's memory, they also assisted researchers and writers of publications and documentaries about Portland's old Black community.

I knew the newspapers were historically important and told mom I wanted them as a very young woman. More than thirty years later, Portland Community College (PCC) contacted mom about using some articles for a display about Oregon's Public Accommodations Law and segregationist practices of earlier years. She told PCC that the newspapers were mine and they had to talk to me about them. I told PCC that mom still had possession of the newspapers and that I was just her agent. I then negotiated payment for the use of her materials for the first time. She was quite pleased and proud to know someone would pay her to use what so many people had referred to as her "junk." Most people knew about her newspaper collection, but they didn't know she saved a lot more than newspapers.

When I cleaned out my parents' house in 1999, I brought home over 100 boxes with the intent of going through them when I retired. I knew that whatever was in them, my mom had saved and I knew that I couldn't throw anything away without looking at it first.

I now know that those boxes contained all kinds of things – every card and letter my mom had received from anyone; documents related to the organizations she belonged to and used her secretarial skills for; daily journals; receipts and records of personal income and expenditures; wedding invitations; funeral and event programs; copies of programs and fliers for political causes, church and social events that she made with her light table, typewriter and mimeograph machine; even her grade school penmanship award, high school diploma and a poem she had published when she was 14. Some of these things I had seen before, but many were new to me. There were so many boxes that I had to make a path through my basement after I moved them to my house.

Mom and I talked about her newspaper collection several times over the years. I promised her that I would find a home for it. She had a NAACP colleague who had donated her papers to a university not located in Portland and then complained about how her donation was being warehoused and not catalogued or used. At the time, mom expressed an interest in having her collection located in Portland and being available to the public. I suggested the Oregon Historical Society, but mom did not believe OHS deserved her collection because OHS did not care enough about Black people to collect its own information about us back in the day. I have been trying to find a home for my mom's collection since she died in 2001 at the age of 88.

I considered donating part of the collection to the newly forming Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture. I joined a group who had ideas of creating a museum and I currently am on the board of the Oregon Black Pioneers/Oregon African American Museum, with plans of creating a museum to be located in Salem. I even convened meetings to discuss creating our own Schomburg West.

About a year ago, my dear childhood friend Avel Gordly invited me to dinner along with Patricia Schechter. As it frequently did, the subject of my mom's collection and my crowded basement came up. Patricia volunteered to use the collection to teach a class in archival methods and then return the boxes to me, with a listing of the organized contents. That sounded like a good deal and I agreed. But I was still focused on the newspapers.

When it came time to pick up the collection, Patricia asked if she could bring Cris Paschild of PSU's library along. I agreed. Their visit has evolved into something more fulfilling than I ever could have anticipated or imagined.

Cris wanted EVERYTHING that I was willing to give to the Library's Special Collection Division. They wanted the whole story that mom had saved to tell. At the time, I don't think any of us realized just how much stuff there was and how varied those items were. Thanks to two classes of Patricia's students cataloging and organizing those boxes, we now know and can see the collection's full scope and contents. Without the assistance of Patricia and those students, there just would be about 100 boxes of various sizes. My deepest gratitude goes to those students for their hard work and sincere interest.

My mom's collection shows a slice of Portland African American life over many decades. It is both the personal and the public life of Otto and Verdell Rutherford, and by extension, their close family, many friends and associates. The collection shows that Portland Black people struggled, worked, partied, and went to church whether it was when only one or two thousand Black people were scattered around Portland or after the Vanport flood when a fairly sizeable Black community was first steered into the area of I-5, the Coliseum and Emanuel Hospital and later, further northeast, into my neighborhood at 5th Avenue and Shaver Street.

Patricia and Cris have validated my mother's belief that documenting the life and conditions of Black people is important. They recognized the historical significance of a collection from a family that had been actively involved in Portland's civil rights struggles and its community. They have made access to the collection possible and I hope their careers will be enhanced through use of the collection. I am certain that the more use is made of mom's collection, the happier she will be.

My parents and I shared a lifelong love of learning, especially about our history and culture as African Americans in this country. I do not know whether I developed my interest through their genetic material or by example. But, like my mom, I have my own collection that also focuses on African American life. I also save written material, including nearly all of the letters that I have received during my lifetime. I saved letters that mom wrote to me during various times when I lived away from Portland. I have also donated those letters so that mom's voice could be present in her collection.

Mom rightfully considered herself a local historian. She was that and so very much more: A beautiful woman with kind heart and a wonderful sense of humor; a volunteer hard worker and community activist who did not seek the limelight; a very good cook, especially her yeast rolls; and most importantly to and for me, a loving, supportive and inspirational mother. I am fortunate to have had her.

Thanks to her foresight, she and my dad will be forever immortalized by having some of their personal effects available for others to study. I am so pleased and proud that they will be remembered while telling the story of Portland's early African American community for future generations.

I have donated the collection to Portland State University, Milfar Library Special Collections Division and the Black Studies Department. It is my hope that PSU students of all disciplines, but especially those of Black Studies, will find use of the collection in telling the full story of Portland's diverse African American community.

In closing, I must again thank the women who have made it possible for me to find a home for Verdell Rutherford's collection: My thanks to Avel Gordly for being my sisterfriend for more than half a century and for hooking me up with Patricia; my thanks to Patricia Schechter for her interest in the collection and for inviting Cris to join the group; and finally, my thanks to Cris Paschild for welcoming this project to the library and for proving the space and resources to maintain the collection and make it available to others. These wonderful women will forever be a part of my family for making it possible for me to keep my promise to my mom.

I know my mom is pleased, as am I.

Charlotte Burnadine Rutherford
Otto and Verdell Rutherford's daughter and youngest child
Portland, Oregon
November 2012

THE EXHIBIT

Family, Migration, and Home

The Burdine and Rutherford families came to the Pacific Northwest between the major migrations of African Americans out of the South in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Around 1890, two Rutherford brothers, William and Edward, were recruited from their native South Carolina to work as barbers at the Portland Hotel, an elite downtown establishment. William Rutherford married Charlotte ("Lottie") White, also of South Carolina and a graduate of Scotia Seminary. The couple raised four boys, all of whom graduated from high school and pursued post-secondary education. The family lived for decades in a house they bought on NE Shaver Street in 1922.

In 1913, Earle and Margaret ("Maggie") Burdine left Oklahoma for a fresh start at farming in Oregon. The couple's heritage reflects the diverse population of Oklahoma, which was once Indian Territory, and the family includes Black, white, and Native American ancestors. The Burdines intended to take advantage of the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909, which made available lands for dry farming in the far west. They stopped in Bend and then moved on to Marshfield (now Coos Bay), Oregon, but could not own land because African Americans were prohibited by law from owning free land in the state. The Burdines finally established themselves in Washington state. There they raised seven children, all of whom graduated from high school in Yakima.

Verdell Burdine and Otto Rutherford met in Portland in 1921 as children, through church connections. The Great Depression of the 1930s brought geographical movement and economic displacement for many people, especially African Americans. When the two married in Oakland, California, in 1936, Verdell was working as a domestic for a family in San Francisco and Otto was working for the Union Pacific Railroad. They settled back in Portland, moving into the Shaver Street house with Otto's father William, two of Otto's brothers, and the family dog. Verdell and Otto raised three children in this home: William, Earle, and Charlotte. The family belonged to Bethel A.M.E. church, where Verdell worked as church secretary for many years.

Verdell Rutherford was an active historian. She was a keeper of family records and information which she shared with kin near and far. She also documented the Portland African American community by collecting public materials, like newspapers, and more private ones, like photographs and letters. Verdell did this work personally, in her home, and she also fostered it publicly, through local exhibits and displays. That individual families and groups donated their materials for safekeeping to the Rutherfords is testament to the trust they placed in Verdell as community historian.

Case 1 contents

Photograph by B.L. Aldrich

Easter at Bethel AME Church, April 17, 1949, Portland, Oregon. The entire Rutherford family is included in this panorama, including Verdell and Otto, grandfather William, and children, Earle, William, and Charlotte.

Photograph by Churchley of Portland, Oregon

W. H. and Lottie Rutherford, 1898

Photograph by The Columbia Studio
Harry Rutherford (standing, left), William Rutherford (seated), and Harry Vincent, c. 1895

Eventually the Rutherford brothers established their own barbershop in Portland on NW Flanders. African American-run businesses – including groceries, undertaking, liveries, publishers, midwifery, and tavern-keeping – provided important services to the community during the era of segregation.

Formal portrait of William, Alan, Otto, and Thomas Rutherford, sons of William and Lottie, c. 1925



Photograph of the Burdine family, just arrived in Coos Bay (then Marshfield), Oregon, 1913

Left to right: Dolores, Verdell, Alfred, mother Maggie, father Earle with son Earle on his knee.

Wedding corsage, 1936, preserved by Verdell Rutherford

Personal photograph, Rutherford family home, c. 1922

Verdell annotated this picture for posterity. The house became an historic landmark in 1999, nominated by the Bosco-Milligan Foundation.

Yakima High School diploma, Verdell Anna F. Burdine, 1931

The typing and stenography skills that Verdell learned in high school made a crucial difference in her ability to earn wages and engage in activism throughout her life.

Bethel AME Church program, February 9, 1958

The Bethel AME congregation in Portland dates back to 1889. The structure pictured in this document was completed in the early 1920s and was located at N. Larrabee Avenue. This program acknowledges the congregation's decision, "as a Living and Progressive Church," to "accept the challenge of Progress" and relocate to NE 8th Street. The city of Portland purchased the N. Larrabee site in 1958 to complete an urban renewal project, now the site of the Memorial Coliseum.

Emanuel Hospital Wristband

This memento pays tribute to the role of Dr. DeNorval Unthank in the life of the Rutherford family and larger African American community. For about 30 years, Unthank was the only practicing Black physician in Portland. Among his many accomplishments was his admission to the City Club of Portland as its first African American member. Not only did Dr. Unthank care for Otto Rutherford during this particular hospitalization, he also delivered all three of the Rutherford children. Verdell also worked as Unthank's medical secretary for many years.

Photograph by Richard Brown

"Collectors of Portland Printed Memorabilia of the Black Community, Otto & Verdell, February 1982."

Richard E. Brown, a long-time resident of Portland, is an activist and photographer.

Personal photograph, "1975 Four Generations."

Left to right: Verdell, Maggie, Charlotte, and Yasha.

Building Community

Verdell and Otto Rutherford each made exceptional commitments to community organizations. The Culture Club, founded by African American women in Portland in 1924 and affiliated with the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACW), was home to some of Verdell's most cherished friendships and projects.

Such organizations were rooted in nineteenth-century voluntary traditions that flourished after the Civil War. These groups linked local African American communities to national bodies which in turn exercised economic and political influence for their members. For example, the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, founded in Washington, D.C. in 1896, was very active with the Republican Party, especially after women's suffrage in 1919.

In the years after World War I, the women's club movement converged in Portland. African American women active in the Young Women's Christian Association advocated for a branch for their community and raised funds for the construction of a building at the corner of NE Tillamook and Williams Avenue, completed in 1926. The Williams Avenue YWCA was tightly networked with the Culture Club and other local women's groups. Together they helped meet the social, spiritual, and employment needs of young people in the surrounding community.

The Culture Club supplemented and corrected deficits in African American history found in the public educational system as well as in the local media and culture venues in Oregon. By fostering study clubs, "Negro History Teas," exhibits, displays and, crucially, college scholarships, the Culture Club made a decisive impact on many lives. These activities especially helped young people, since African American youth in public schools were steered away from college preparatory classes and toward vocational training. The Culture Club was especially successful at raising money for scholarships for college-bound students and in educational activities for the broader community.

The Vanport Flood of 1948 produced hardship on Black families who had relocated to Portland to work in the war industries, like the Kaiser shipyards. After the flood, the city turned away from the housing and employment needs of African Americans, who found themselves displaced and increasingly segregated. In this stressful context, the Williams Avenue YWCA struggled to regain its footing. The women of the Williams Avenue YWCA however remained active and continued to meet but dynamism shifted to the Culture Club. Under Verdell's leadership, African American women in Portland became much more actively linked to other organized women in the state through the Oregon Association of Colored Women (OACW) as well as to the national body (NACW). The state and national conventions gave Oregon women visibility, solidarity, and ideas for activism.

Case 2 contents

Annotated photograph of charter members of the Culture Club, c. 1924

Letter from Letitia Brock to The Rosebud Study Club, January 15, 1938

This letter suggests how the Culture Club coordinated a number of women's groups in order to advance "Negro History Week" and underscores the importance of the Williams Avenue YWCA building in hosting such efforts. The letter also highlights collaboration through the Oregon Association of Colored Women (OACW).

Photograph of Parade Float, Rosebud Study, probably Portland Rose Parade, c. 1918

Invitation to Culture Club Mardi Gras Benefit Scholarship Fund, 1941

Photograph of the Culture Club's Mardi Gras

Benefit Scholarship Fund Dance Royalty,

Portland Women's Club, May 12, 1941

Left to Right: Joyce Hilliard, Rose Marie Brock, Phillis Reynolds, Gertrude Williams, Betty Ann Rutherford, and Ruby Minor.

Oregon Association of Colored Women artifacts
Newsletter from 1951 and delegate registration card, 1958

Floors, banners, songs, displays, newsletters, conventions, and pennants fostered visibility and pride. Both in public and in private, these materials and activities created cultural space and legitimacy for African Americans within a larger society that frequently ignored or downplayed their presence and accomplishments, especially those of women.

Letter from Odessa Freeman to Mrs. C. Berry on YWCA letterhead, May 10, 1940

This letter acknowledges the close collaboration between the Williams Avenue YWCA and the Culture Club. By pooling resources to stock the building's kitchen, women moved their domestic skills into the public sphere in the community's interest.

National Notes Magazine, Autumn 1959

Verdell was a long-time subscriber to the NACW's publication, *National Notes*, and took great pride in announcing and publishing Portland women's accomplishments in its pages, which she then carefully annotated for future readers. This issue pictured the NACW's headquarters building in Chicago, named for noted club woman, Irene McCoy Gaines (1892-1964).

Prize Cup, Culture Club "Best Artwork" Award

Thelma Flowers '53, Lenora Gaskin '54, and Jo Anne (Vernell) Watson '55

Program of the 8th Annual Negro History Tea and Exhibit of the Oregon

Association of Colored Women's Clubs, 16 February 1958

"Negro History, Art Shown at Tea," *Oregonian*, 18 February 1953

The second week in February contained the birthdates of both Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln and from the 1860s, these dates were marked by African Americans to commemorate the end of slavery. In 1926, with support from historian Carter G. Woodson and the *Journal of Negro History* in Washington, D.C., community groups and schools began to advance the notion of "Negro History Week" in February.

Verdell Rutherford and the Culture Club continued this tradition in Portland for decades. Fundraisers for scholarships usually accompanied these educational and commemorative activities. By actively promoting African American history in the community, Verdell helped women redefine what it meant to be Black in a largely segregated and frequently hostile environment.

Receipt for purchase of "books on education of the handicapped,"
Lewis and Clark College to Culture Club, June 30, 1952

This receipt demonstrates the Culture Club's philanthropic commitment to supporting education, as emphasized in their club motto, "Progress through education."

Letter, Edna Tidwell to The Culture Club, September 25, 1963

In this letter, University of Oregon student Edna Tidwell acknowledges the scholarship she received from the club and pledges herself to being "worthy of this honor."

Culture Club Year Books

"Magic Carpet," 1938-39; "Charter Members," 1945-46; 1955-56; 1956-57

Building Community

For Otto Rutherford, local chapters of national fraternal organizations such as the Grand Lodge of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks afforded him decades of solidarity, leadership, and service opportunities. These fraternal orders often grew out of workplace or skill-based groups and did double duty as informal labor organizations; some, like the railroad brotherhoods, fed the organized union

movement directly. In the early 1900s, local orders of the Masons encompassed a significant number of prominent community members. For example, J.C. Logan, E.D. Cannady, Howard Sproules and Edward Rutherford, co-founders of the *Advocate*, an early local Black-owned newspaper, were all Masons.

Otto went on to become an active member of the local Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks. Their Billy Webb Lodge is located at 6 North Tillamook and is the longest standing Black-owned building of Portland's African American community. Originally home to the "Williams branch" of the YWCA, it was also a meeting place for NAACP, the Oregon Association of Colored Women, the Urban League, and the Congress of Racial Equality. It served as a recreation center for African American soldiers during World War II and as a refuge for Vanport residents fleeing the flood of 1948. The Elks purchased the property from the YWCA in 1959.

Case 3 contents

Photograph, Meeting of the Golden State Grand Chapter of the Eastern Star, Portland, Oregon, 1937

Yearly Masonic conventions were held throughout the Pacific Northwest, and Masons travelled extensively, welcoming, meeting and celebrating other brethren and the opening of additional lodges. Conventions were also a time to combine resources and create connections and community networks for political purposes.

Photograph by Baltzger's Photos, Portland, Oregon of Billy Webb #1050 lodge members, c. 1950

Otto Rutherford is seated front and center, holding gavel.

Letter from T.A. Harris, Grand Master, Most Worshipful Sovereign Grand Lodge, to George Kenny of Excelsior Lodge #23, January 28, 1917.

Portland's Excelsior Lodge #23 was chartered under what is now known as the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California. Harris is responding to Kenny's inquiries on the local lodge's procedures and plans by placing them in the context of national practice.

Elks Lecture Book I.B.P.O.E., 1949

To enter and move up the ranks (or "degrees") of the Elks required study. Members read various texts, listened to lectures, and mastered history lessons in order to gain the knowledge and competency to lead their fellows. Elks tested and examined each other and in this way, the order offered educational and self-improvement opportunities.

Member pin and ribbon for the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (IBPDE)

This pin was worn by Otto Rutherford. Notice image of clock set to 11:00. This hour was traditionally set during meetings as a commemorative moment to acknowledge anniversaries or other important dates during Elks' meetings and gatherings.

Fez for members of Billy Webb Lodge #1050

Rutherford served as President, Exalted Ruler, ("P.E.R.") of Portland's Billy Webb Lodge. Webb was a piano teacher and musician who played with a band on steam ships that plied the Willamette River in the 1920s. Webb had migrated to Portland around 1906 and he and his band members established an Elks organization, initially named the "Enterprise Lodge."

Otto Rutherford's Past Master Grand Lodge Mason apron



Culture and the Community

The Rutherford family's community engagement went beyond their work with civic and social organizations, extending to the arts and communication. Otto Rutherford joined the cast of the Portland Civic Theater in 1948 and remained active in the local theater scene as a member of the Portland Black Repertory Theater, whose mission, according to director and producer Rosemary Allen, was to provide "a performance outlet for artists of color." Otto's daughter Charlotte, with her then husband, opened Blackfashion, Portland's first African American-focused clothing store in 1968. After returning to Portland State in 1974, Charlotte served as a student editor and writer for the Black Studies Program's magazine, *Ujima*, a forum for articles "related to the Black experience in urban America—on and off campus, fiction, scholarly pieces, prose, profiles of interesting indigents, and news of interest . . ." She was also the television host for the series "Black on Black," a show featuring "Black people talking about Black people; their problems and solutions."

Case 4 contents

Photograph of Otto Rutherford in costume as the King of Persia for a "St. Phillips Players" performance of "Queen Esther," 1952
Otto Rutherford is on the right. Father Lee Owen Stone of St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Parish is on the left.

"Black Theater Hopes Success in Script," *Oregonian*, February 15, 1979
Otto Rutherford was an actor in the Portland Black Repertory Theater, which began at Portland State University in 1975. The troupe included theater arts students and community members.

Members of the Portland Black Repertory Theater, pictured in 1979
L-R: Rosemary Allen, Otto Rutherford, Ann Hall, Vernon Ambus, Kollieh Dura Suma

Program, *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, 1978
This play, directed by Rosemary Allen, was the third production of the PSU Black Cultural Affairs Board. The performance troupe became the Portland Black Repertory Theater in 1979.

Program, *The Little Foxes* by Lillian Hellman, Portland Civic Theatre 1948-49 season
Otto Rutherford, whose role (as Cal) was his first for the Portland Civic Theatre, is introduced on page 5.

Article, *Portland Observer*, October 2, 1975
Charlotte Rutherford (then Charlotte Williams) was the television host of "Black on Black," a show aired by local public broadcasting and focused on "Black people talking about Black people; their problems and solutions."

Article, *The Oregonian*, August 22, 1968
In 1968, Charlotte Rutherford and her then husband, Kenneth Jones, opened their retail store Blackfashion on 3619 NE Union Ave. In the article Charlotte and Jones note their hope that the store can also become a "retail outlet for crafts (including sewing) by residents of the Albina area."

Ujima, publication of the Black Studies Program, Portland State University. Vol. 1, nos. 1, 2 & 3, 1975
In addition to being a student of the Black Studies Program and an active member of the Black Students Union, Charlotte was also a student editor of *Ujima*, a magazine published by Black Studies. These issues include

photographs and a description of Portland's 1974 Kwanzaa celebration and information on a 1975 panel at Portland State featuring then Mayor of Atlanta, Maynard Jackson, and author Toni Morrison.

Activism

The Rutherfords took a leading role in fostering NAACP activities in Oregon from the 1940s to the 1970s. The Portland branch was founded in 1914, making it one of the earliest in the nation (the founding chapter in New York City was established in 1909). As civil rights agitation picked up after World War II, the Rutherfords led the effort to pass a Public Accommodations Law to prohibit discrimination in Oregon. Otto was president and Verdell secretary of the Portland NAACP when this bill finally passed in 1953.

Verdell's secretarial and bookkeeping skills gave her activism a boost as well. She owned her own typewriter and mimeograph machine and did publicity and organizing work from their house on Shaver Street, often enlisting her children's help. The Rutherfords participated in national civil rights meetings throughout the period. A special highpoint was achieved when the annual NAACP conference was held in Portland in 1978.

Otto and Verdell also gave time and energy to allied civil rights organizations, like the Urban League. Otto supported the railroad brotherhoods in union organizing efforts and founded Local 901 of the Amalgamated Textile and Clothing Workers Union at Dehen Knitting, where he was hired as the company's first African American employee in the 1950s. Daughter Charlotte Rutherford went on to help found the Black United Front and the Black Justice Committee.

Case 5 contents

Invitation, "Four Freedom's Dance," 1944
Enormous civil rights energy was unleashed during WWII. Here Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" becomes an emblem for the "Double V" strategy among African Americans—a victory against fascism abroad and against racism at home. The dance shows how the Portland NAACP raised money for its advocacy and legal work as well as built community.

Handbill, Albina Hall Mass Meeting, c. 1930s
The mass meeting is a long-standing tradition in African American communities that dates at least to the end of slavery. Though the franchise was limited to adult men before 1919, whole communities gathered to

deliberate on positions and candidates. After women's suffrage, such deliberations received fresh urgency. Nonpartisan organizing served important educational purposes and during the civil rights movement, mass meetings were essential to fostering solidarity, hammering out agendas and strategies, and keeping spirits high.

Text of Oregon Senate Bill 169, Civil Rights Law, signed into law in April 1953

Photograph of NAACP Youth Group by Baltzgar's Photos, Portland, Oregon, undated.

Handbill and campaign button, c. 1950

Local initiative 500s was a Portland-based effort to outlaw racial discrimination in public accommodations. The measure failed. This handbill, designed and written by Verdell and printed at home, vividly represents the centrality of her labor and talents in political mobilization around civil rights in Portland.



Ninth Annual Meeting agenda program for the Portland NAACP Federal Credit Union, January 26, 1966

The NAACP credit union afforded community members local control of their finances and a path around racial discrimination in lending and financial services common in branch banking in the mid-twentieth century. In addition to roll calls, reports, elections, and refreshments, the program for this meeting included a musical selection by Velma Phillips and Carl Harris, presentations of the 1st and 1000th borrowers, awards, and a special tribute to NAACP Federal Credit Union founder Phil Reynolds.

Sheet music, "Support the NAACP" by Fred Norton and Walter Bishop
Group singing served a number of purposes in organizing. Learning and singing the words to songs built community and solidarity; the lyrics, handed down over the years, also bridged intergenerational links. Singing also drew on spiritual and religious traditions with familiar tunes put to new purposes.

Publicity photo, December 23, 1954

Godfrey Ibom, Nigerian exchange student from the University of Oregon, presents proceeds from the first settlement under the Oregon civil rights law to Miss Grace Choi, Korean exchange student from the University of Oregon Foreign Students' Service Fund and to Otto Rutherford, president of NAACP for its Legal Redress Fund.

Personal photograph of civil rights leaders, 1959

Left to right: Oliver Smith, U. K. Plummer, Thurgood Marshall, Otto Rutherford (standing) and Edgar Williams.

Program, 1978 NAACP national convention, Portland Oregon
Local school children participated in a contest to illustrate the cover of the program. The winner was Marcus Randy McKinley, a senior at Washington High School, then located in the southeast neighborhood.

Pamphlet protesting the shooting of Rickie Charles Johnson
In 1975, 17-year-old Rickie Charles Johnson was fatally shot in the back of the head by a Portland police officer during an alleged robbery attempt. He was the fourth black male shot and killed by Portland police in a five month period. This pamphlet protests Johnson's shooting and the following inquest that found it "justifiable." The author's expression of appreciation for the support of the Black Justice Committee, the Portland Defense Committee, the Urban League, and the NAACP speaks to the breadth of the community's reaction to these incidents. Charlotte Rutherford was a founding member of the Black Justice Committee which led the call for a federal investigation into the shootings not only of Johnson but of Kenny Allen, Charles Menefee, and Joe Hopkins.

Press release on "Police Possum Posse," Black United Front, March 19, 1981

COLLECTION NOTE

This exhibit's title, "Say We Are Here," appears in the inscription found on the back of a photograph taken of Margaret and Earle Burdine and their children upon arrival in Marshfield, Oregon in 1913. Maggie Burdine's phrasing is an answer to an implied question; she presumes a dialogue with future keepers and viewers of the photograph. Maggie passed this historical consciousness on to her daughter, Verdell, who carried it forward with great intensity. A century after the photograph was taken, Verdell's daughter Charlotte today honors tradition with the gift of her family's papers to Portland State University in 2011. It is a privilege to introduce these materials to a wider audience.

The acquisition of the Verdell A. Burdine and Otto G. Rutherford Family Collection by PSU library marks a high point for the study and transmission of African American history in Portland, the Pacific Northwest, and the nation. The collection is a unique, wide-ranging, and precious assemblage of primary source materials in three domains. The first involves the personal records of the Burdine and Rutherford families; these materials document migration, kinship ties, and place-making over the entire twentieth century. The second domain touches key community institutions in the African American community in Portland, Oregon in the middle decades of that century, especially clubs, voluntary associations, fraternal orders, and activist groups. The third area involves ideas, culture, and expressive activities undertaken by Verdell and Otto, especially the efforts of Verdell to preserve and promote African American history. Taken together, they present a remarkable portrait of a family and a community over four generations.

Those four generations include a strong line of women: Maggie Boles Burdine Cash, Verdell's mother; Verdell herself; her daughter, Charlotte (born 1947); and Charlotte's daughter, Al-Yasha (b. 1969). This multigenerational sweep is extremely rare in U.S. archival holdings. Unmistakably, the collection bears the special imprint of Verdell's vision, care, and meticulousness. A trained secretary and bookkeeper, Verdell was also an avid reader and collector of information, like newspapers. She was also a saver of everything from greeting cards, recipes, posters, and photographs to a variety of ephemera and memorabilia. She was a lively interpreter of the past for her intimate circle of

family, friends, and colleagues, as well as for a larger set of public audiences in Portland and beyond. Over the years, individuals, families, and organizations donated their own materials to the Rutherford family for safekeeping, further testament to their status as trusted guardians of community memory.

One of the most important contributions to knowledge made by this collection is its documentation of a specific historic phenomenon: the existence of a contiguous residential African American community in North and Northeast Portland, one with the highest percentage of home ownership of the major west coast cities at mid-century. Scholars have researched the making of this community, centered on the World War II era of migration and wartime employment. They have also documented the fragmentation and dispersal of this population via urban renewal and gentrification in the 1960s and 1970s. But this collection actually contains the records of the vibrant decades of the immediate post-war period at the height of the civil rights movement in the U.S. Of special interest are the school, church, club, fraternal, and activist activities that helped nourish those who stayed in Portland after the 1948 Vanport flood. These institutions provided key services and solidarity essential to survival in the often chilly social and political climate of Oregon.

Community institutions provided the base to launch activism which peaked in the 1950s and 60s. To date, Oregon does not figure in the usual tellings of the civil rights movement found in documentaries like *Eyes on the Prize*, the numerous King biographies, or the museums in iconic locations like Memphis and Atlanta. By providing details from Oregon's 1953 Public Accommodations Act to the 1978 hosting of the NAACP national convention in Portland, the Rutherford collection promises to recontextualize the chronology and regional basis for the black freedom struggle in the U.S. The timing and dynamics of Portland's activism will greatly enrich what scholars and general audiences know about the causes, effects, pace, and direction of change in this understudied part of the country.

The Rutherford collection documents especially well the agency of women in family life, community building, and advocacy work. The collection contains backbone archival materials of key women's organizations, like the Culture Club (founded 1924) and the Williams Avenue YWCA (established in 1921). Relations among female kin, especially Maggie and Verdell and Verdell and Charlotte, are very richly detailed. In addition, Verdell's network of neighbors, friends, and family based in Portland and Yakima are astonishingly well preserved. Although they lived in the era of the telephone, this special group of women hand wrote letters and cards to one another with remarkable consistency. They faithfully marked the rhythms of the life cycle and shared

intimacy, humor, celebrations, frustrations, and grief over not just years but decades. The correspondence conveys an unusual immediacy and a kind of sacredness of words-in-representation. The Rutherford collection easily trebles the historical record of what is available in the Pacific Northwest about African American women's history and it ranks among a very select number of collections nationally for its depth and scope.

The exhibit described in this catalogue highlights four themes: Family, Community, Culture, and Activism. Student researchers in PSU's public history program performed the lion's share of processing, selecting, and interpreting of the material. Three goals guided their work. First, we tried to make special use of the visual and three-dimensional items that the library was uniquely positioned to display in-house and that might be overlooked by traditional scholars who tend to stick to the printed record. Second, the curators wanted to highlight the intergenerational aspects of the collection, since that framing puts into relief the social rhythms and relationships among women that can be occluded by the more familiar frameworks of politics, elections, and legislative benchmarks (though these are, of course, included). Finally, the curators tried to keep in mind the reality of racial segregation for a group of historical actors who worked hard to oppose and subvert its effects. In other words, because the Rutherfords were such a high-achieving and engaged family, the curators had to read for the gaps and silences about discrimination when the documents tended to point to a successful outcome or solution.

The Rutherford collection contains traces of literally scores of lives in the Portland African American community during the twentieth century. Some of these lives are well known in local history, like those of Dr. DeNorval Unthank or attorney Thurgood Marshall. Some lives and faces flicker across the collection unnamed. This exhibit thus marks the first echoes of a response to Maggie Burdine's call that titles this exhibit: Say We Are Here. History is what we make it. It is up to us and future generations to listen to the stories and the silences in the collection in order to learn, be challenged, and be enriched by it.

Patricia A. Schechter

September, 2012

For more information about access to the Rutherford collection, please contact PSU Library Special Collections at pschild@psu.edu or 503-725-9883

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