city, town

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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Type all entries—complete applicable sections Name historic Fruit and Flower Mission Number of Contributing Resources 1 Fruit and Flower Day Nursery/ and or common Helen Gordon Child Development Center Number of Non-Contributing Resources O Location 1609 SW 12th Avenue street & number N/A not for publication Portland Portland N/A vicinity of First Congressional Distrct city, town **Oregon** 41 Multnomah state code county code 051 Classification **Ownership** Status **Present Use** Category district _X_ public X occupied agriculture museum building(s) _ private unoccupied commercial park X_ educational _ structure both work in progress private residence _ site **Public Acquisition** Accessible entertainment religious object N/A in process _ yes: restricted government sclentific N/A being considered yes: unrestricted _ industrial transportation military other: Owner of Property Portland State University name PO Box 751 street & number Portland 5 4 1 _N/Avicinity of city, town state Oregon 97207 **Location of Legal Description** Multnomah County Courthouse courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. 1021 SW Fourth Avenue street & number **Portland** state Oregon 97204 city, town **Representation in Existing Surveys** title has this property been determined eligible? Portland Historical Landmark date 1970 federal state county X local depository for survey records City of Portland Bureau of Planning, 1120 SW 5th Avenue

Portland |

7. Description

| Condition | | Check one | Check one | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|--|--------|
| _X_ excellent | deteriorated | unaltered | <u>X</u> original site ∠X ∠X ∠X ∠Y ∠Y ∠Y ∠Y ∠Y ∠Y ∠Y | |
| god | ruins ruins | X altered | moved da | te N/A |
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The Helen Gordon Child Development Center Building was built as the Portland Fruit and Flower Mission in 1928. The architect was Sutton & Whitney Architects, Portland (given as Sutton, Whitney, Aaandahl, and Fritsch in the Portland Historic Resources Inventory). Principal designer was Frederick A. Fritsch. The building is designed in a modern interpretation of Georgian Style townhouse architecture, employing Flemish Bond pattern brick walls with flat brick quoins at the corners and a simplified cornice in brick. The building remains in the same use and substantially the same condition as when built, and is well maintained as part of the physical plant of Portland State University.

The building and site comprise all of Lots 1 & 2, the north 3/4 of Lot 3 and the last half of Lots 7 & 8, Block B, Portland Addition, City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. It is at the southwest corner of the intersection of SW Market and Twelfth Streets in the Portland State University community of buildings. The south half of the block has a PSU parking structure. To the west is SW Thirteenth Street and the freeway, I-405. Across Twelfth to the east is a landscaped half block and two older residences used for PSU offices. The area to the north consists of lowrise commercial and apartment buildings. Automobile traffic on SW Market is heavy, but the area is generally attractive and well maintained, compatible with the building and its use.

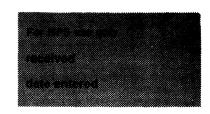
The site is roughly 150×138 feet square with a small parking lot section cut out of the SW corner. The building consists of a major "H" plan $(65 \times 81\text{-foot})$ block, two and one-half stories high (31-foot ground to ridge) extending south into the center of the site; brick-walled play yards on the south and west sides, with a one-story brick-walled play shed along the south property line; and a half cellar under the rear west half of the building. The front entrance is on SW Twelfth Street, with a side entrance (not used except for emergency exit) on Market Street. Deliveries are in the rear by a passage from Market Street.

Most of the presently-noted alterations to the original building appear to have been made in 1972 after its acquisition and rehabilitation by Portland State University, as seen on copies of the construction drawings for that work.

The site is landscaped with mature trees and shrubs: maple, camellia, boxwood and others. Most of the play areas are concrete and asphalt paved. The front walk and steps are brick paved. The Market and Twelfth Street elevations are separated from the sidewalk with a low brick wall, which has brick piers with Indiana Limestone caps. There is a wrought iron arch and lantern at the entrance walk.

The roofs are slate shingle hipped type with shed dormers, except for a flat center section within the hip roofed sides of the Market Street main block and the flat roofed sun porches on the south sides and ends. Flat roofs are mineral surfaced cap sheet topped by built-up-roofing for the center main roof and perimeter gutters and asphalt mopped BUR for the porch roofs. Dormers have copper sheet clad siding and roofs. The play shed roof matches the main building. Built-up-roofing is a relatively recent replacement and is consistent with the original specifications; other roofing and metal cladding is original. Metal flashing is suitable replacement.

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Foundation construction is plain and reinforced concrete according to the architect's specifications, 4 sack (per cubic yard) mix for foundations and reinforced work, 3 sack mix for miscellaneous plain concrete work. A reinforced concrete floor slab is over the boiler and "garage" areas of the cellar. The remaining area under the building is unexcavated crawl space. All other main floor and upper floor framing, wall and roof framing, is wood frame construction. Unusually heavy floor framing was noted for the first floor, 2×10 joists at 12 inch centers.

The exterior of the building is Willamina Brick laid in Flemish Bond pattern with 1/2 inch struck joints. There is a corner belt course at the second floor line, window and doorway arch and lintel, and cornice patterned ornamentation of the brickwork: corner quoins, flat three course belt line, flat soldier course window arches, and header course door arched openings. The flattened brick cornice band has a plain frieze, simple header brick dentil band, and a four course corbelled crown molding band. The whole cornice had been painted a medium grayish green or off-white.

Windows are predominantly double-hung, 8/12, 8/8, with some other combinations, and with multi-lite casement sash in the sun porch wings. The secondary exterior doors are "X" paneled with upper lights. The front door is four paneled with a fan lite top panel, set in a wood framed arched opening. The front entrance is a half-round, two columned Tuscan order "Tempietto" pavilion with flat pilasters at the wall. Some windows now have aluminum framed insect screens in place of the original wood-framed insect screens. Exterior door hardware appears to be original. Exterior window frames are slightly recessed, painted wood brick casing with heavy bull-nose edge sills.

The exterior of the building is in very good condition generally. The brick masonry walls of the yards and grounds show moderate to severe weathering and neglect, indicating that restoration work is needed if these elements are to be preserved. Other than the cornice brick courses there was no sign of general brick painting in "Virginia white" as originally specified. Exterior wood finish and trim was specified for "Dutch boy white lead" finish in "colors as directed."

Exterior alterations have been made to the fire escapes and stairs from the second floor rooms to the play yards. The play yard access walks and stairs are modern and inconsistent with the design of the building. Play equipment in the yard is relatively new. Some features of the original yards' wrought iron gates and railings have been lost, but the overall condition is compatible with the historic building and its use.

The architect's specifications make reference to a garage construction, but there is no sign of this feature in the existing building configuration. The present storeroom in the NW corner of the cellar may have been originally planned for a garage, and has either been altered at some time or was changed during construction; its construction suggests a different function than as presently used.

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The interior spaces, materials and condition appear substantially as original without any major alterations; however, the architect's plans have not been found for comparison. The interior is simple and functional with minimum elaboration. The use of special details and finishes is limited to the "Belgian Black" marble base and border, and alternating black and light gray "Italian Pavonazzo" (1928 specifications) marble tile paved entrance foyer; mahogany casing, trim, paneling, and casework, especially in main stairway, nursery, offices, and for general casing and trim throughout (fit was specified); and the two office fireplaces with marble and tile facing, hearths and wood mantels. The main stairway is especially designed for children with low risers and broader treads and both special low level and normal level handrails. If the originally specified oil paint finishes for walls and ceilings with painted muslin covered wainscot where shown was ever used, it is concealed by later painting or was removed. The back hallways clearly show that calcimine wall paint was the original finish for those surfaces.

In place of the originally specified terrazzo floors in the toilet rooms and lavatories, the flooring is one inch hexagonal unglazed mozaic tile. Glazed white tiles are used on the toilet walls up to wainscot height. Gray marble toilet stall partitions are in place.

The second floor room configuration indicates that resident apartments were provided for staff along that floor's north side, where the rooms have full baths with built-in bathtubs, two one-room with bath and one two-room with bath suites.

Interior wall and ceiling finishes are predominantly painted plaster. Oak flooring was specified for offices and apartments and fir flooring for other areas, which have been covered with vinyl-asbestos tile or carpet, and the dark stain and varnish finished mahogany wood trim and casings. Most rooms are relatively plain. Paneling or wainscot is used only in the stairway and northwest first floor room group. Doors are paneled, stile and rail type, with mostly original hardware in good condition.

Rooms have been redecorated in various pastel and off-white paint colors, with some recent decorative ornamental painting on walls. Ceilings have had 12×12 inch cellulose fiber acoustic tile, regular punched pattern, affixed as a corrective measure in most areas. Lighting has been modernized with surface mounted commercial style fluorescent luminaires, with only a few of the original brass wall bracket and ceiling fixtures remaining (offices, foyer and stairway). The similar present use of the building as compared with its original purpose had made it unnecessary to make major alterations.

The third floor is presently locked and vacant because of exit and fire safety limitations, but is otherwise unchanged. Its principal features are the small dormer rooms and the cedar paneled "quilt" room in the NW corner, at the top of the back stairway.

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The kitchen is only slightly modernized, having some of its original counters and cabinets, an old glass door commercial style refrigerator, and an older style gas range. The kitchen is in active use for food preparation. A dumbwaiter is installed full height form clear to the third floor in the back hallways adjacent to the laundry and kitchen.

Bath and toilet facilities are complete with most of the original 1920s fixtures. The child sized water closet and lavatory fixtures are a unique feature of this building and similar nursery and elementary school buildings of the period.

The building's utilities have been slighty modernized recently with the addition of an oil-fired, steam heating boiler, and additions to the electrical system, but the basic systems are as originally installed. The main electric service panel equipment in the boiler room has the original Westinghouse-fused main switch and sub-switches instead of a modern main circuit breaker and loadcenter panel. The sub-panels throughout the building are similar vintage switch and fused branch panels. Heating throughout the building is with both recessed and free-standing cast iron steam radiators, with sheet metal enclosures in some cases. The present staff believe that there was originally a coal-fired boiler and coal storage, but coal was seldom used in Portland. Usually employed was either wood or sawdust bulk fules, or Gasco Briquettes, a crude by-product of the Portland Gas and Coke Company (Gasco) gas manufacturing process. The original specifications are for an oil-fired boiler.

Modern laundry facilities occupy the south room of the cellar area (by the back cellar door areaway) indicating that a part of the west yard may have been used for clothes drying lines. Other cellar rooms are used for materials and dry foods storage.

Only the cellar is automatic sprinkler protected. All other area have had electronic fire and smoke detector signal systems with concealed wiring added.

Architecturally and historically significant features of the Fruit and Flower Building are its exterior appearance, setting and materials; general interior materials and qualities; interior finishes, especially the main stairway and nursery paneling and trim; the sunporches; the child-sized toilet and lavatory facilities; the typical 1920s toilets and baths for the apartments; and the few remaining original lighting fixtures and the history and use as a children's nursery and day-care center.

Original drawings for the building have not been located, but later alterations and measured working drawings are filed with the Portland State University Facilities Planning Department, along with one copy of the architect's original typed carbon copy reproduced construction specifications.

8. Significance

| Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900– | Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture architecture art commerce communications | ng landscape architectur law literature military music | re religion science sculptureX social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify) |
|--|---|--|--|
| Specific dates | 1928 | rederick A. Fritsch (Surchitects) Hanson Const | |

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
The Portland Fruit and Flower Mission, known from 1948 to 1972 as the Fruit and Flower Day Nursery, was built in 1928 at the northwest corner of the intersection of SW Twelfth Avenue and Market Street near downtown Portland, Oregon. It was the work of the noted local firm of Sutton and Whitney, whose principal designer for the project was Frederick A. Fritsch. The building is significant under National Register criterion "c" as an outstanding example of early modern architecture in the Georgian style. For its modern emphasis of form over detail, its original use of historical ornament, such as a simple dentiled cornice and bowed diminutive portico, and for the exceptional quality of its exterior finish work, including roofing slates and Flemish bond face brick, the building was officially recognized by the Oregon Chapter, The American Institute of Architects, in the 1930s as representing the best of contemporary work in the state. The building is equally significant under criterion "a" for its association with the development of private social services in Portland. Specially designed for nursery and day-care functions, it marked a period of exceptional achievement by the Fruit and Flower Mission, which had been founded as a day nursery for the children of poor, working parents as early as 1906.

The architect of the Fruit and Flower Nursery was Frederick A. Fritsch (1891-1934). A native of Portland, Fritsch had no formal architectural education. but entered the field as an apprentice in the firm of Whidden and Lewis. He worked for Morris H. Whitehouse from 1911 to 1917. During most of this period he also participated in the Portland atelier of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design. Fritsch served as an instructor in architecture at the University of Oregon in 1917 and 1924, and was in the Army Medical Corps from 1981 to 1919. After discharge from military service, Fritsch joined the firm of Sutton and Whitney. With this firm his great achievements were winning the competition for the proposed Scottish Rite Cathedral of Oregon in 1922; the Masonic Temple in Portland (National Register property) completed in 1927, also the result of competition and the largest single commission awarded at that time in Oregon; the Neighbors of Woodcraft Building in Portland; the Shriners' Hospital for Crippled Children, also in that city; and the Fruit and Flower Building described in 1936 as Sutton and Whitney's "supreme achievement." With his health failing, Fritsch moved to Philadelphia for medical treatment in 1929. He returned to Portland in 1931 where he resided for the balance of his life. Fritsch was noted, as described in his obituary in Pencil Points, for "his keen judgement in matters of scale and proportion, . . . inexhaustible patience in the selection of materials and textures, and a subtle understanding of colors, and finally for ironical thrusts. witticisms, and pungent criticism."

The associative importance of the property with the Portland Fruit and Flower Mission merits equal consideration under criterion "a." Fruit and Flower is the 3**4**2 - 15

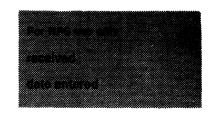
9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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| 10. Ge | ograp | hical Data | | | |
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| name/title | Gordon | B. Dodds, Professor | of History | | |
| organization | Portlan | d State University | d | ate Augu | ıst 13, 1985 |
| street & number | PO Box | 751 | te | lephone (503 | 3) 229-3917 |
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oldest continuing day-care center in Oregon, and one of the oldest charitable institutions in the state. Its history reflects the changing philosophy of child care, the changing methods of financing it, and the changing social class of its children.

Fruit and Flower began a century ago. Founded on April 29, 1885, by eight young girls (aged ten to fourteen), the Children's Flower Mission, as it was originally named, was designed to deliver flowers and food to shut-in persons. The Mission disbanded in 1888, but was reorganized in 1893 under the name of the Portland Flower Mission. Many of the founders assisted in the reformulation. The scope of the Mission's work now broadened to include supplying needed articles (e.g., food, clothing and furniture) to other local charitable institutions. On April 16, 1906, however, the Mission took on a more specialized role when it opened the Flower Mission Day Nursery for children of poor, working parents. One child enrolled on the first day in the nursery building at 13 Fifth Street.

Portland's first day nursery reflected a conjunction of important social developments in the early twentieth century history of the United States: the obvious necessity of providing day shelter, medical care, and food for children of the slum areas of the industrializing nation; a constructive outlet for middle and upper-class women who had leisure for charitable works; an attitude on the part of the new social service professions that poor people's needs should be addressed by a variety of specialized institutions; and the belief that helping poor parents to work, by providing care for their children would stimulate the work ethic and reduce the cost of social services. Flower Mission Day Nursery was a reflection of a national phenomenon. The charitable day nursery movement began in eastern cities and spread to Portland through visits by a Chicago day nursery operator in 1905, and by Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge, President of the National Federation of Day Nurseries and the New York Day Nursery Association, 1906.

From the day of its opening, Fruit and Flower (as it was renamed in 1911) flourished. Attendance increased, the variety of services expanded, and the first professionally-trained staff member was added (in 1919). In 1920 the nursery was admitted to the newly-organized Portland Community Chest. Success meant a series of moves to new quarters: 231 Twelfth Street (1912); 404 Madison Street (1915); and as East Side Nursery at 44 Union Avenue that operated from 1912 to 1915. Because of constant growth in the number of children served, the Mission directors began in 1921 to discuss a permanent building. These discussions resulted in the purchase of a property at Twelfth and Market Streets in 1924. The buildings on this property were to be used until a new structure was constructed. Adjoining property was acquired in 1925. In August, 1926, the Portland architectural firm of Sutton and Whitney presented a plan for a new building which was accepted by the board of directors on October 7, 1926. In a letter the following month the firm wrote: "We have given much thought to the design of the building believing this to be of equal importance with the plan. The perspective shows a simple English Georgian design of red brick of homelike appearance rather than formal." A campaign to raise \$85,000 as a building fund began in April, 1927 under the

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direction of Raymond B. Wilcox, a Portland banker, real estate investor, and former president of the Chamber of Commerce. The development committee was composed of several businessmen and civic leaders including Julius L. Meier.

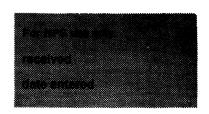
Both the fund raising campaign, aided by a special benefit performance by the Duffy Players at the Heilig Theater, editorial support from local newspapers, and the donation of office space by the Corbett Investment Company, and the construction of the building moved forward at a rapid pace. The Hansen Construction Company of Portland was awarded the building contract. Work began in early May, 1928. The school moved into the new structure on November 24 and the building itself was opened on December 11, 1928.

The building is a three-story brick structure in the Georgian style. Upon its opening in 1928, the first floor was occupied by the kindergarten room and the girls' playroom. This floor also included the boys' playroom, kitchen, dining room, and offices. The second floor contained the children's bedrooms (one each for girls and boys), a nursery, and three lavatories. A circular fire excape led from this floor to the ground. The third floor held bedrooms for some of the staff. The building was constructed to accommodate at least 136 children. Adjacent to it were the playground (part of which was covered and reached by a covered walkway) and an infants' garden enclosed by a high wall. The flagpole was acquired from the old Pantages Theater in Portland. The portico of the building is classical Georgian and the entire structure is well-proportioned. The distinctive exterior brick work pattern influenced several of Pietro Belluschi's buildings, including the Portland Art Museum.

After moving into its new building, the nursery was physically prepared to meet most of the challenges of the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War. For overfifty years the building has been a stable force in a changing world. It has housed scores of teachers and hundreds of children, including John "Bud" Clark and Lawrence Smith, who later became, respectively, Mayor of Portland and musical directory of the Oregon Symphony Orchestra.

In the 1930s, the Mission began to consider the educational development as well as the custodial care (diet, health, cleanliness) of the children entrusted to it. With the 1940s came greater changes of philosophy and of clientele. During the war some of the children were daughters and sons of defense workers rather than those of poor families as had hitherto been the case. However, most of the war workers' children were housed in the innovative child service centers operated by the Kaiser Shipbuilding Corporation and financed by the United States Government. When federal funds for day-care disappeared after the war, the retiring director of the Kaiser centers persuaded Fruit and Flower's board (because of the nursery's prestige in the community) to continue some of the progressive practices introduced by Kaiser. Chief among these was a shift to concentration upon the educational development of the children symbolized by the requirement (insisted upon by the Community Chest in 1945) that all the head teachers hold degrees in education. This standard became that for the entire City of Portland. In 1946

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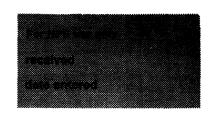
formal staff training was instituted and in 1948 the nursery was renamed the Fruit and Flower Day Nursery. In 1970, Fruit and Flower received its first federal funds, but this source remained uncertain. Today, as throughout its history, private individuals and private insitutions are the principal supporters of Fruit and Flower.

In 1972 the Fruit and Flower Day Nursery moved to its new building at 2378 NW Irving Street. Since the 1960s there had been discussion of the desirability of a move. Urban renewal had changed the character of the neighborhood, driving away the low income residents. Construction of the Stadium Freeway provided difficult access for some parents. Most of the families using the nursery in this era wer students from Portland State University and the University of Oregon Dental and Medical schools—the temporarily poor. By the early 1970s it thus became advantageous for Portland State to purchase the nursery school building and for Fruit and Flower to construct a new one in the Northwest area of the city.

Since acquiring the structure, Portland State University has named its child care program and the building for Helen Gordan, a humane, reesourceful, and influential educator of young children. Helen Gordon moved to Oregon in 1953 from Denver to work at the Jewish Commmunity Center. Later she served as a director of the Community Coordinating Child Care Council. She served on many national child welfare committees and was awarded the Kelley Low Memorial Award and the Rosemary Dybwad International Award in Mental Retardation.

Today Portland State University's Helen Gordon Child Development Center is a laboratory for students and faculty participating in observation, practicum, and research activities in early childhood educaton and the related fields of elementary education, psychology, social work, special education, and speech and communication. It serves 110 children and has a staff of 13 permanent and 50 part-time members. The work of the Center is the continuation of child care and children's education that has occurred in its building for fifty-seven years and was foreshadowed and developed by the previous occupant of the building a century ago.

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Spectator, Portland, 1927.

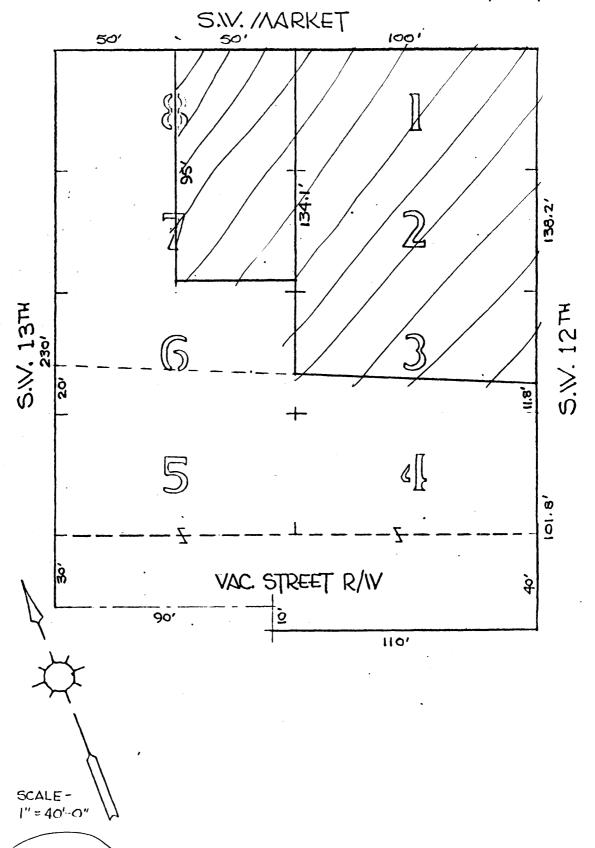
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Telegram, Portland, 1926-1928.

SOURCES

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Fruit and Flower Mission. Annual reports, correspondence, and minute books, 1926-1928. In possession of Fruit and Flower Child Care Center, Portland.



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PORTLAND STATE COLLECT

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