

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUN 15 1977

DATE ENTERED JUL 20 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Pacific County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Cowlitz and Vine Streets

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

South Bend

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

#3 - The Honorable Donald L. Bonker

STATE

Washington

CODE

53

COUNTY

Pacific

CODE

049

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Pacific County

STREET & NUMBER

Cowlitz and Vine Streets

CITY, TOWN

South Bend

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington 98586

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Auditor's Office, Pacific County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Cowlitz and Vine Streets

CITY, TOWN

South Bend

STATE

Washington 98586

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Washington State Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

January, 1975

__ FEDERAL STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Olympia

STATE

Washington 98504

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED

CHECK ONE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	
<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Pacific County Courthouse in South Bend, Washington is sited imposingly on a hillside above town, overlooking the Willapa River. The handsome white-stuccoed structure is situated just south of the intersection of Vine Street, or Memorial Way, and Cowlitz. Approximately two blocks to the north is South Bend's major riverfront arterial. Facing the courthouse grounds along Cowlitz Street and occupying the surrounding hillside neighborhoods to the east is a stock of stylistically varied, turn-of-the-century housing.

The site consists of 6.9 acres, attractively landscaped with flowering shrubs and trees. A broad expanse of lawn fronts the courthouse and is bounded on the north by Cowlitz Street. Access to parking lots at the east and southeast corner of the building is provided by a driveway leading from Cowlitz. Beyond this drive is a duck pond with waterfalls and hilly, wooded rock gardens. Forested slopes rise sharply to the rear and to the west of the courthouse complex, defining the perimeters of the site. Directly behind the courthouse is a two-story concrete jailhouse with a hipped roof, constructed c. 1925. The jail is connected to the courthouse at second floor level by a steel footbridge. Immediately west of the jailhouse is a small cement block residence, constructed in post-World War II years for use by the jailer and matron.

The Pacific County Courthouse itself was erected in 1910-1911 for a total cost of \$132,000. Early in the project, specifications were prepared for a "fireproof" courthouse of two stories, measuring 80 feet by 120 feet. The structure was built by the Northwest Bridge Works Company of Portland, Oregon, under the architectural direction of C. Lewis Wilson and Company of Seattle, Centralia and Chehalis. Today, the courthouse remains an exceptionally well-preserved, sophisticated example of public architecture, all the more remarkable for its location in the heart of a rural lumbering and fishing district.

In terms of its massing, its wall articulation, and its arcaded fenestration pattern, the courthouse may best be described as an example of the Second Renaissance Revival style. Basically rectangular in plan, the two-story reinforced concrete structure rests on a partial daylight basement. Its shallow hipped roof is clad with composition roofing, and is crowned with a ribbed dome on a polygonal drum. The exterior wooden skin of the dome, supported by the roof's truss system, is surfaced with asbestos aluminum paint. Clerestory lighting through the drum is now externally protected by corrugated fiberglass. A massive copper cornice with mutules encircles the entire building, overhanging a broad frieze with irregularly spaced ornamental triglyphs.

The front or north facade is characterized chiefly by a monumental frontispiece, framed by two pairs of free-standing Doric columns a full two stories in height. These columns support a projecting portion of the primary entablature comprised of a segmentally-arched cornice with bold returns. A formal entrance to the courthouse - a double leaf door with multi-paned transom and sidelights - is centered within the frontispiece. Further elaboration of the entryway is created by a semi-elliptical flight of steps fronted by a large cement date stone which displays the names of the architects, builders, and county commissioners responsible for the building's construction. Two ponderous cast iron light standards with spherical globes flank the columned portico at the first floor level.

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The north elevation of the courthouse is also distinguished by a rhythmic alternation of pilasters and window openings. Wide, flat-surfaced pilasters extend uninterrupted from base to frieze. Framed between the pilasters are generously dimensioned windows, rectilinear at the first story and round-arched at the second. Although these wooden sash windows with their multi-paned transoms are clearly divided at second-floor level by horizontal spandrels, the continuous verticality of the flanking pilasters achieves the visual effect of a full two-story arcade. The north facade is, in addition, richly embellished with classical details such as fasces, cartouches, and naturalistic motifs apparently formed of built-up stucco. The overall composition of the north elevation - pilasters and fenestration, entablature and ornamental reliefwork - is repeated with equal elaboration on the three remaining facades.

The interior of the Pacific County Courthouse is notable for its impressive central rotunda. The space is particularly pleasing in terms of volume and proportion. The rotunda conveys a warm, Baroque-like quality attributable to its lighting and ornament, as well as its color and texture. Alterations to the building's fabric in this and other public areas such as the courtroom have been minimal and for the most part reversible. A relatively recent paint job has obscured some original design work on the walls of the rotunda, foyers, and stairwells. Unfortunately, some county offices in the basement and elsewhere throughout the building have been more radically remodelled with the installation of partitions and lower ceilings.

The north or main entrance foyer is a brightly lit vestibule with a coffered ceiling. On the walls are fasces-framed panels containing naturalistic local scene paintings. Double circular stairs of cast iron are located in the rear foyer, on the opposite or southerly side of the rotunda, providing access to basement offices and to the courtroom, and offices on the second floor. The staircases retain their marble newel posts and oak handrails.

The central rotunda's ribbed, art glass dome, 29 feet in diameter, is its most impressive feature. It reaches to a peak height of c. 104 feet. Pacific County monograms in cartouches are incorporated into the glazed pattern of gold, green and pink. Supplemental artificial lighting has been installed above the dome to enhance its effect. The first floor of the rotunda area is defined by a series of recessed niches, pilasters and archways, including four corner accesses to first floor office areas. Tympanums within these archways are decorated with Pacific County monogrammed cartouches and cornucopias of plaster. These and all moulded cornice and coffer elements are polychromed in muted shades of pink, silver and green corresponding to the glazing of the dome. Throughout the first floor public areas are intact brass light fixtures with spherical globes connected by chains to ornate plaster cartouches. Wrought iron grillwork set within windows that open from the rotunda into "public" office spaces has been generally blocked from behind. For the most part, however, the dark-stained woodwork of fir remains in place including a number of richly-panelled office doors with moveable transoms.

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A balcony encircles the rotunda at second floor level. Here the dome rests on a full entablature with a decorated frieze, supported by steel columns encased in cement. The columns have been marbled to represent the more costly stone. Wrought iron and brass-plated railings border the open well at the center. At the southeast corner of the second story, the spacious courtroom has been reasonably well-preserved in its original condition. An artglass skylight is situated at the center of the coved ceiling. The ceiling itself has been faced with accoustical tiles that conform to its coved surface. Important features such as the judge's bench, a pedimented aedicule behind it, the jury box, balustraded railings, window sash, and entablature - all of natural stained wood - remain untouched.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1910-1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT C. Lewis Wilson and Company, Architect:
Northwest Bridge Works, Contractors

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pacific County Courthouse, constructed in 1910 and 1911, commemorates the close of the pioneer period in Pacific County and the beginning of the modern era. The county's development in terms of white settlement extended over a period of some fifty years with frequent changes in the location of the county seat. Not until construction of the "gilded palace of extravagance", as one local newspaper man described the courthouse at the time, that South Bend's preeminence was assured. The structure thus marks the true beginning of political and economic stability in one of Washington's oldest counties. In addition, the courthouse represents one of the most arresting and architecturally sophisticated county courthouses in the state.

The land which forms Pacific County today is bounded on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the south by the wide and turbulent mouth of the Columbia River. The white man's record in this portion of the Pacific Northwest dates back to 1792 when Captain Robert Gray achieved a successful landing at Chinook, a village of the Chinook Indians on the Columbia River shoreline. Modern day Pacific County also includes the area explored by Lewis and Clark in 1805 at the terminus of their overland journey to the Pacific coast. By an act of the legislature of the Oregon Territory in February of 1851, Pacific County was created out of the larger Lewis County, and thus became the Territory's third county north of the Columbia.

Pacific City, a small deep water settlement on Cape Disappointment, was named as the first county seat. Within a year, however, Cape Disappointment was designated by the U.S. government for use as a military reservation and the site of Pacific City was eventually extinguished. The functions of county government were apparently transferred to Chinookville, where a court session held in June of 1853 in a cramped, one-room structure was colorfully described by the early historian James G. Swan. At about the same time, the town of Oysterville on Shoalwater Bay was founded by R. H. Espy and I. A. Clark. Oystering rapidly developed as a profitable industry and the town grew with an influx of sailors, newly-arrived pioneers, and exiles from Pacific City. In May of 1855, citizens of the county elected to establish the county seat at Oysterville, soon to become the cultural, educational, and religious center of the coastal region. Court was held in a series of hotels until, in 1875 or 1876, a two-story frame structure was erected specifically to serve the needs of county government.

During the decade to follow, the small settlement of South Bend on the Willapa River experienced a tremendous boom period, owing to the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad and the increased importance of the lumber industry. As the economy of the region shifted from the seashore to the inland forests, and coastal schooners regularly entered South Bend's protected harbor, real estate developers eagerly promoted South Bend's

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,0 438 1,0,0 5,16,77,8,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The courthouse property is bounded on the north by Cowlitz Street, on the east and south by Cedar Street, and on the west by an imaginary extension of Vine Street, or Memorial Drive, leading in a southwesterly direction to its intersection with Cedar Street. The property includes Tax Lot #2, South Bend, and the north $\frac{1}{2}$, northeast $\frac{1}{4}$, northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 33, Township 14, Range 9.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Florence K. Lentz, Historic Preservation Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 1128

CITY OR TOWN

Olympia

DATE

April, 1977

TELEPHONE

(206) 753-1707

STATE

Washington

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Joanne M. Welch

TITLE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

June 8, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Clark [Signature]

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7/20/77

DATE

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physical expansion. The county election results in November, 1852 were overwhelmingly in favor of transferring the county seat once again, this time to South Bend. While the legality of this vote was still under investigation (railroad workers were accused of stuffing the ballot box in South Bend), a daring raid to secure the county records in Oysterville was staged by a group of South Benders in February of 1893. In order to expedite the move to South Bend, the adventurers broke down the doors of the Oysterville courthouse and invaded its offices. Supplies, records, and furniture were packed up and shipped off to South Bend, in spite of single-handed physical resistance by the county auditor. The "kidnapping" of the county seat, as the incident came to be known, was not unlike other acts of violence which often accompanied the formation of county governments in the developing West.

South Bend first housed the county offices in the old brick Bristol and Leonard Building for lack of a more suitable structure. About one year later, a site on the outskirts of town was donated by the Northern Land and Development Company and a frame courthouse was erected in what was generally agreed to be a rather inconvenient location. The "Old Courthouse" in "Upper Town" was constructed by W. B. Murdock, and remained in service until the present-day edifice was completed in 1911. The citizen movement advocating construction of new facility in downtown South Bend was instigated by a threat from the nearby town of Raymond. This growing community had indicated its interest in vying for the county seat, an intention which stirred South Bend into action.

C. Lewis Wilson and Company of Chehalis and Seattle were hired by the county to prepare plans and specifications for the new building. Bids were opened for its construction in August of 1909. Initially, the bid of local contractor C. O. Rude for \$87,730 was accepted by the Commissioners. On the very next day, Rude discovered that he had underestimated his bid by \$10,000. One-half of Mr. Rude's forfeit bond, which he had neglected to pay, was demanded by the architect C. L. Wilson. The Commissioners, however, were more concerned that Wilson's plans and specifications be brought into conformance with Rude's bid. The architect was instructed to revise his plans for the interior of the building, after which a call for bids would be reissued. Wilson's subsequent alterations did not effect the original design for the exterior of the Renaissance style courthouse, but several costly interior features such as marble columns were eliminated.

In November of 1909, the Commissioners awarded a contract to Northwest Bridge Works Company of Portland, Oregon for their bid of \$82,984. The estimated completion date was to be October, 1910. During the course of construction, the courthouse project was embroiled in a number of additional scandals, all typical of the colorful incidents which have traditionally surrounded major public works projects. Each new development was avidly reported to the local citizenry by South Bend newspapers. In June, 1911, the new Pacific County Courthouse was complete. All records and county offices were transferred

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to the "gilded palace" on June 24, and have permanently and peacefully remained in this significant county landmark for the past sixty-six years.

To date no information has been uncovered concerning the architect C. Lewis Wilson. He is credited with designing the Franklin County Courthouse in Pasco, Washington in 1913, a structure which is remarkably similar to the courthouse in South Bend. Both buildings conform to a standardized plan, and show a likeness in overall massing and in the use of a central dome and a spacious interior rotunda. However, Wilson's imaginative variations in the composition of these two building facades, through the manipulation of Renaissance design components, show him to be a skilled practitioner in this idiom. Richly contrasting materials and consistent attention to detail on all exterior and interior surfaces may also be defined as hallmarks of Wilson's public works.

Among county structures in the State of Washington, Pacific County's courthouse is widely recognized as one of the most distinctive. Certainly it is one of the more ornate examples of county architecture of the early 20th Century, a period in which the more austere Neo-classical Revival style was pervasive in public design. The building represents a relatively early application of reinforced concrete construction, and utilizes a circular laminated beam in conjunction with steel columns to support the art glass dome. In these respects, the courthouse is an excellent example of the application of contemporary building technology, no doubt due largely to the involvement of the Northwest Bridge Works Company. The architect Wilson, however, clearly demonstrated a thorough comprehension and appreciation of emerging engineering principles, as well as of the history of western architecture. Wilson was unusually successful in adapting historically-based Renaissance design features to 20th century materials and usage requirements. Wilson also achieved an exceptionally high level of formality and elegance in the major public edifice of an essentially rural Washington county.

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